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THURSDAY APRIL 10 1997



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32-PAGE SECTION

Shift of mood gives Government best figures for four years as Blair's personal rating falls

Labour poll lead slashed by the Tories

By PETER RIDDELL

THE general election came alive for the first time last night as an opinion poll for *The Times* showed that the Conservatives have started to make big inroads into Labour's commanding lead.

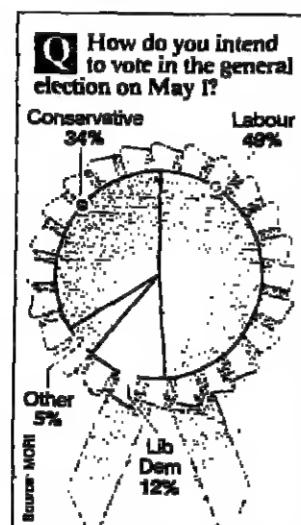
The MORI poll, taken on Tuesday, puts the Tories on 34 per cent, up six points since last week, while Labour is down by a similar amount to 49 per cent. The Liberal Democrats are up a point at 12 per cent. Tony Blair's rating as the most capable Prime Minister has also dropped sharply over the past week.

The real significance of these figures is less the sharp fluctuations in the figures over the past week, or the narrowing in the Labour lead from 27 to 15 points, than the evidence that the Tory rating is at last climbing out of the narrow band where it has been for 18 months.

The Tories have been stuck around 30 per cent, plus or minus a couple of points, and 34 per cent is the party's highest figure in a MORI poll for more than four years. Labour is still only at the lower end of its recent poll ratings and remains strong favourite to win a clear Commons majority.

All the parties have been waiting — whether eagerly or nervously — for some sign of a real shift in the polls to change the mood after the apparent stalemate of the first three weeks of the campaign. Until now, only one pollster has shown any real movement.

If the Tory advance is sustained over the next few days, there will be pressure on Labour to modify its safety-first style of campaigning and take more risks. By contrast, Tory morale will be boosted after all the distractions caused by the recurrent stories about "sleaze" and the Neil Hamilton affair. The latest poll was taken after Martin Bell made his dramatic entrance into the Tatton contest as an anti-corruption candidate. Nevertheless, Labour is still



raise the Tory rating, but also made some people less sure of how they intend to vote. The proportion of people saying that they may change their minds has risen from 25 to 28 per cent over the past week, which is higher than during past campaigns. But the number certain to vote is lower than at the same stage of past campaigns.

The number of people who think Mr Blair would be the most capable Prime Minister has fallen from 46 to 35 per cent — with his appeal declining most among men and among 18 to 34-year-olds. This has only partly benefited John Major, now regarded as most capable to be Prime Minister by 27 per cent, compared with 22 per cent a week ago. As significant has been a rise in don't knows from 18 to 24 per cent. Nevertheless, a majority of the public still believes that Labour is ready to form the new government and that Mr Blair is ready to be Prime Minister.

The Tory upturn is confirmed by other questions asking which party is best on the issues which people regard as the most important in deciding their votes. While Labour is well ahead on the issues of most concern — health, education and unemployment — the Tories have improved their position on management of the economy and taxation.

While Labour has been emphasising broken promises over tax made at the last election, the Tories have been concentrating on more recent tax cuts and improvements in living standards. Senior ministers will this morning seek to highlight the latest unemployment figures.

MORI interviewed 1,114 adults at 83 sampling points across Britain on Tuesday, April 8. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (8 per cent), those who say they are undecided (12 per cent) and those who refuse to say (4 per cent).

ELECTION '97

The Saatchis will have to try harder if they want to frighten voters without reminding them of the record of Tory years 9 Anatole Kaletsky, page 9

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Canvassing MP is attacked

A man approached Jerry Hayes, 43, the Tory MP, who was canvassing in his Harlow, Essex, constituency, swore at him and punched him in the jaw before running off. Mr Hayes, who was sent home after hospital treatment, said: "This has never happened to me before in Harlow."

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Golfer repeats the hole-in-one magic

By ADAM FRESCO

TWO women golfers who scored a hole in one at the same hole within seconds of each other were celebrating another success last night.

Suzi Toft, of Trentham, near Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, and Jill Dyke defied odds of 100 million to one with their shots last week. Television crews turned up at Trentham golf course yesterday to watch the pair play and were astounded when one of them scored a hole in one again on the same hole.

Standing on the 16-yard par three fourth hole, with ITN cameras whirring, Mrs Toft, 72, took a few wood, hit the ball onto the green and watched in amazement as it dropped into the hole.

Mrs Toft said: "It really is absolutely out of this world." Mrs Dyke, 60, then sent her tee shot to within a foot of the hole. She said: "It was wonderful, we were euphoric." Paul Austin, director of sports for



National Trust to ban deer hunts

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
COUNTRYSIDE
CORRESPONDENT

THE National Trust is set to ban deer hunting on its land today in a move that will end a tradition going back more than half a century after a damning scientific report concluded that the sport is unacceptably cruel.

A recommendation that deer-hunting licences should not be renewed on expiry at the end of this month, when the current season finishes, is considered almost certain to be endorsed at a meeting of the trust's 52-member governing council.

The two-year study compiled by Patrick Bateson, Professor of Ethology at Cambridge University, found that hunted deer experienced extreme physical stress similar to that suffered by animals severely injured in accidents.

Cruelty report, page 6

Germans welcome fans with beer

By ADRIAN LEE

MANCHESTER UNITED fans, who converged on Dortmund for their team's Champions League semi-final last night, enjoyed a six-hour "festival" in the sun, as part of a massive, but low key security operation by German police. Some officers wore United scarves.

In the city's central Alter Markt, some 3,000 supporters were able to drink freely before the game. The match was shown live on a giant video screen for those unable to get tickets.

Rival fans mingled good humouredly and there was little trouble from the British supporters.

One United fan was taken to hospital after he was apparently struck on the head with a bottle and there were minor skirmishes before the game. There was no sign of the 300 German troublemakers that police had predicted might try to ambush the English sup-

porters, though 25 German fans were arrested before the game for fighting among themselves.

Police handed out leaflets in English welcoming the United fans to Dortmund. Organisers said the festival ensured most of the supporters were in one area of Dortmund before the game and they defended the ready availability of strong lager, at £2 a pint, which left many fans clearly the worse for wear well before kick-off.

"If we don't serve beer, fans will just buy it from the shops," said Gerd Kolbe, a council spokesman. Police said they expected up to 1,000 ticketless United fans, but were confident there would be no repeat of the violence which marred the team's visit to Portugal in the previous round.

Last night's match was a 48,000 sell-out, with 3,800 United fans having bought tickets officially.

Middle Britain is hit hardest by changes in the tax system

By ALASDAIR MURRAY AND JILL SHERMAN

TAX changes since 1992 are costing the average household £7 a week, an independent study concluded yesterday.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies, the economic research group, said those earning between £15,000 and £20,000 a year and the "traditional" single-earning family had been among the biggest losers from the tax rises.

Low income families have also suffered heavily from the increases, which include the rise in National Insurance contributions, the introduction of VAT on fuel and cuts in mortgage interest rate relief.

The IFS said taxes have increased by a total of £11.5 billion since the last election with the tax burden rising from 34.5 per cent of national income to 36.25 per cent — although taxes remain lower than in most European countries.

The data is based on a comparison of the tax system operating in 1992 with the new tax regime introduced this month, disregarding rises in income. The IFS has calculated how much people are paying in tax now against how much they would be paying if the Chancellor had made no tax changes, except to take account of inflation, in every Budget since 1992.

Middle Britain has suffered because of changes to married couples' allowances and mortgage interest relief, whilst the lowest income groups have been hit by VAT on fuel and tobacco.

Pensioners have suffered least as they have not been hit by increases in National Insurance contributions or cuts in mortgage interest relief.

Single pensioners are paying 80p more in tax a week, whilst couples are paying £2.40 more now than in 1992 — around 1.1 per cent of their total income.

But the IFS added that incomes have risen since the last election — although not at levels seen in the 1980s.

The average income for a married couple with two children

Continued on page 2, col 1

Melissa Bell, the devoted press agent, yesterday: "Dad would make a great MP"

New rival for Hamilton

By RUSSELL JENKINS AND CAROL MIDDLETON

A SENIOR Tatton Conservative is on the verge of standing as an independent Tory against Neil Hamilton. Derek Squirrel, deputy mayor of Knutsford, is said to be considering his position and an announcement is possible on Saturday.

The move came as the anti-seizure candidate Martin Bell, revealed his secret weapon: his 21-year-old daughter, Melissa, who is acting as his press officer. Miss Bell, the elder of two daughters, is articulate, bilingual, and utterly photogenic. She is also devoted to her father, who would

make a "great MP" — not beholden to some party whip.

Mr Squirrel, a local businessman who has been a member of the Tatton Conservative Association for eight years, is understood to be under pressure from friends to enter the lists. Asked whether he intended to stand, he replied: "The dust has not settled yet. I have had a lot of telephone calls."

Other rebels want a high-profile Conservative — perhaps a seatless former MP — to come forward. That, they believe, might prompt Mr Hamilton to stand down.



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Stoppard trial blunder starts fingerprint inquiry

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

A MISTAKE in the identification of a fingerprint caused the collapse of the trial yesterday of a man accused of burglary at the home of the medical broadcaster Miriam Stoppard. An investigation will now check all other cases which involved the same fingerprint expert.

The accused man, Andrew Chiori, 21, a student, had served two months on remand awaiting trial for allegedly stealing £41,000

in 1995 from the Mayfair home of Mrs Stoppard, who is also an author and agony aunt. Simon Harris, a fingerprint expert with the Metropolitan Police, had said that he was "in no doubt" that Chiori was responsible for the break-in, after examining a print found on a wall.

However, other experts hired by Chiori's lawyers found that the conclusion's were "fataally flawed", and the Metropolitan Police have now called in officers from South Yorkshire to carry out an inquiry into how the error was made.

Other evidence presented by Mr Harris will be checked in the inquiry headed by Chief Superintendent David Foss, of South Yorkshire Police.

Last night the Metropolitan Police referred all inquiries in the case to the South Yorkshire force, which said that it could not give a detailed comment as Mr Foss was not available.

Mr Chiori, from Woolwich, southeast London, was formally acquitted at Southwark Crown Court yesterday after Peter Grieves-Smith, for the prosecution,

said that Mr Harris had made an error of judgement.

Mr Chiori, who pleaded not guilty, was not in court for the acquittal, which took place before his trial opened.

Mr Grieves-Smith said that Mr Harris had made an error of judgement. He told Judge Gerald Butler, QC: "It was an error of judgement by Mr Harris to come to the conclusion that he did. I am asked to apologise for the error that he made.

"The work he has done in the past is being double-checked, but

we do not anticipate any further problems."

The court was told that fingerprint experts present their reports on a sliding scale of reliability, using the categories "in no doubt", "highly probable", "probable" and "possible".

Mr Harris had put the Chiori identification in the top category. The judge said that he rarely saw the words "in no doubt", and added: "There is a public interest, a proper public interest, in this particular case as Chiori spent some time in prison awaiting trial."

Frank Kearney, solicitor for Chiori, said last night that he had challenged the fingerprint evidence of Mr Harris in February and had demanded a review. He said that the print was not his client's and there was no other evidence against him.

The Crown Prosecution Service wrote to him last month to say that they would be offering no evidence against Mr Chiori. Mr Kearney said: "I requested a full explanation and I am still awaiting one."

He said that yesterday's move highlighted the need for all forensic

evidence to be challenged. He would be advising Mr Chiori to take civil action to claim damages for the two months he spent in prison on remand.

Fingerprints have been viewed as a reliable way of proving guilt. Sixteen different characteristics per print have been required as proof, but police are now suggesting that that number need not always be obtained.

The Association of Chief Police Officers is suggesting that the opinion of a fingerprint expert should be sufficient.

US legal firms snap up City offices

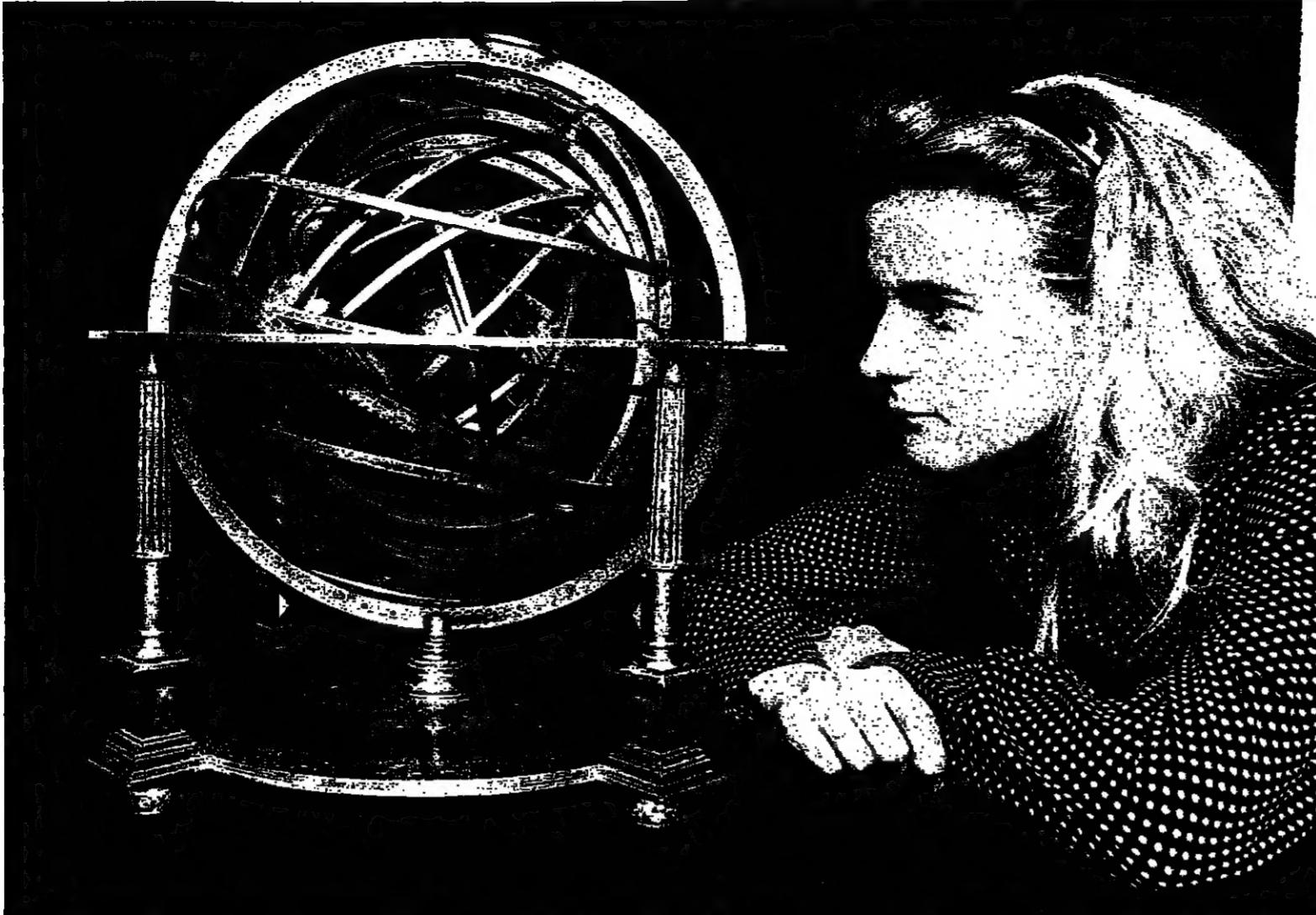
By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

AMERICAN law firms are buying huge chunks of the City in a new competition drive with the big London law firms. A survey by Chesterton, the property consultants, has found that American lawyers have taken or are looking for an extra 137,000 sq ft — three acres — of office space in the City. American law firms now occupy 180,000 sq ft.

The expansion is likely to create a fresh boost to City lawyers' salaries as recruitment competition heats up. Judged against the yardstick that American law firms require 300 to 400 sq ft per lawyer, the survey suggests that US law firms are preparing to recruit more than 340 lawyers to fill their new office blocks. Some will come from the firms' headquarters in the States. But many will be poached from City law firms.

Mark Bourne, of Chesterton, said: "UK lawyers will need to look to their laurels. Our research proves that the threat to their business from across the Atlantic is both real and growing." He said American law firms have changed their business strategy. "No longer are they content just to service US corporations in the UK — they are now recruiting British lawyers and seeking to compete aggressively with UK firms for a wide range of legal business."

US law firms are already creating a superleague of highly-paid lawyers. Last year one US law firm advertised a salary package of between £200,000 to £700,000 a year for three partners.



Old view of the universe sells for an astronomical price

At auction, it took just four minutes to change hands between Christie's, European collectors in telephone bidding.

Although its astronomical functions have long been discredited, the 16th-century sphere was regarded as the ultimate scientific acquisition, the supercomputer of its day.

Another Christie's specialist said: "Quite simply, this is probably the most expensive practical instrument of its day. It represents the highest form of art in the late Renaissance period."

The gilt-brass Ptolemaic armillary sphere was probably made by craftsmen from Plan-

ters. Mr Collins said: "In the late 16th century, the very best instrument makers were the highest paid artisans in the world, and the things they made were the ultimate in the high technology of the age. The instruments indicated the status of the owner as someone who understood modern science."

Ptolemy, the astronomer and geographer Claudius Ptolemaeus, was at Alexandria between AD 127 and 151. He said the Earth was the fixed centre of the universe.

Middle earners are hit hardest by tax changes

Continued from page 1
ren and a single earner has risen by £765 this Parliament compared with £2,035 in the period 1987 to 1992.

But Chris Giles of the IFS, said: "Income gains over the last 15 years have been skewed towards people with high income."

Income for the richest 10 per cent of households are 59 per cent higher than in 1979, whilst incomes for the poorest 10 per cent of society have risen by only 6 per cent compared with 15 years ago.

The IFS said that neither of the main parties' manifestos to reduce tax are likely to improve this position. The Conservatives say they will reduce the basic rate of tax to 20 per cent, which the IFS said would cost around £6 billion a year in lost tax revenue.

Labour, meanwhile, has said it will aim to introduce a 10 per cent starting rate "in the long term", which the IFS says will cost £9.5 billion if the 10 per cent rate replaced the existing 20 per cent band.

Liberal Democrat plans to increase allowances, raise the basic rate by 1 per cent and impose a new 50 per cent rate on taxable incomes of more than £100,000 would raise £2 billion, the IFS said. People with an annual income below £13,000 would be better off, while those on higher incomes would lose out. The 140,000 people who earn more than £100,000 would be worse off.

The IFS also issued a stern warning to both major parties that they are unlikely to meet their public spending targets during the next few years.

The latest spending plans

Carey wants schools to teach morals

By RUTH GLEDHILL

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, will emphasise today the importance of teaching moral values to children in school.

Public spending is forecast to rise by an average of just 0.4 per cent over the next three years compared with an average of 1.9 per cent since 1979.

The IFS is particularly critical of the target set for health service spending which is forecast to rise by an average of 0.6 per cent a year over the next three years, compared with an average increase of 3.1 per cent since 1979.

Dr Carey says: "We want people who leave school to be good citizens and good neighbours, not just stuffed heads and effective contributors to the economy."

Dr Carey, referring to debate over marriage in the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority report, says that he would want to add stronger points about marriage and family life.

Teaching morality, page 20

Catholic escapes death as gun jams

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

A ROMAN Catholic man escaped being shot dead yesterday when a gun jammed as a suspected loyalist terrorist attempted to shoot him a second time.

Kieran Delaney, 23, was ambushed at 7.30am in the Newtownabbey area of north Belfast as he waited for a lift to work. The gunman, disguised as a postman, pulled a gun from his post bag and shot Mr Delaney in the neck. As he tried to fire again, his pistol jammed. He was then picked up by a car which was later found burnt out on the Rathcoole estate in the north of the city.

John Delaney said that his son had no political connections. "He did get a threatening letter about a year ago which said we are watching

you. I don't know why they picked Kieran out because he is not involved in anything. All he does is go to his work."

Mark Langhamer, an independent Labour councillor in Newtownabbey, said that the shooting bore the hallmarks of a loyalist attack. He said: "The route appeared to be planned, the getaway route was planned, the clothing disguise in place, and the lad had been targeted some time before. It seems to be a planned loyalist attack."

Mr Langhamer said that the shooting would raise questions about the loyalist ceasefire. "It does appear that that ceasefire is in something of a mess. My sources of information tell me that this man was wholly unconnected with any political party."

Marchioness damages

A saxophonist has accepted



High Court damages of £150,000 after her career was wrecked by the Marchioness disaster in August 1989. Jo Wells, 38, right, was aboard the pleasure cruiser when it collided with the sand dredger Bowtelle. Fifty-one people were killed. Ms Wells, who had toured with the band Tears for Fears, has been unable to work since because of severe depression.

Billie-Jo inquest opens

Billie-Jo Jenkins died from severe head injuries caused by numerous skull fractures, an inquest was told. The girl, 13, was killed in February at home in Hastings. Detective Superintendent Jeremy Paine, head of the murder inquiry, told the inquest that she had been struck repeatedly with a heavy instrument. The girl's legal guardian, Sian Jenkins, 39, has been charged with her murder and released on £25,000 bail. Her natural mother, Debbie Woods, travelled from her home in Essex to attend the ten-minute hearing in Hastings yesterday. The inquest was adjourned.

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Absent fathers too busy to notice children growing up without them

By LIN JENKINS

MODERN fathers are neglecting their children by failing to share even the simplest domestic chores or help with homework.

A report published today says that a fifth of children questioned could not recall sharing an activity with their fathers during the previous week. Yet four fifths wanted to spend more time with them, compared with only 2 per cent who wanted more time with their mothers.

The MORI survey of 1,000 children aged 8 to 15 contradicts the stereotype of "new man" taking

■ A fifth of children cannot recall doing anything with their father last week, says a MORI survey which contradicts the popular image of "new man"

an equal role in bringing up children. However, most children still live in a traditional family with two parents and retained strong links with their extended family.

Children wanted parents to exercise authority, give moral leadership and set boundaries on behaviour, such as imposing a time to come home, insisting

homework schedules were met and setting rules on smoking and drinking. Jim Harkin, director and chief executive of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, said most children enjoyed close and loving relationships with both parents.

"But, even in the 1990s, some fathers appear to be remote figures. We cannot say whether this is

a result of heavy workloads or other factors. But what is clear from the survey is that most of the children did want their dads to spend time with them."

Four out of ten children reported some form of social outing outside the home with fathers at least once a week, but all said they spent less time doing things with their fathers than with their mothers.

They were also less inclined to turn to their fathers with problems. Of those under 11, almost all would discuss personal matters with their mothers while just over half felt able to approach their fathers. Of those aged 11 to 15, only a third

would discuss a particular problem with their father while four out of five said they would consult their mothers.

Most thought good fathers should make them laugh, make and mend things around the house and not necessarily undertake the shopping and cooking. Good mothers, on the other hand, were required to be able to cook.

Many famous fathers were away from home yesterday — but mainly because they were spending the last remaining days of the school holidays with their children. Desmond Wilcox, the television producer and reporter whose career

has taken him away from his three children for long stretches of time, had just spent ten days with Emily, 19, Rebecca, 17, and Joshua, 15. He said the trick was to juggle work and family life. "I make them a priority, equal to and beyond work. When you are pressured, in whatever career field, you will wind up with a rather sterile sense of victory if you have lost touch with your children."

Gary Lineker, the footballer turned television pundit, whose son George, 3, is recovering from leukaemia, was unavailable yesterday as he was taking him and

his brothers Harry, 3, and Tobias, 1, to the cinema. His wife is expecting their fourth child in August. "He is very committed to his family and makes time for them," said his agent Jon Holmes.

Michael Parkinson, the broadcaster and journalist, who has three sons, said: "I think the fact that my wife and I have stayed together is the single most important factor in our children's happiness, more than anything else. I never thought about spending time with my sons."

"If you stop to think about it, it becomes a task and parenting is not a task, it's a joy."

Teenagers raped tourist and threw her into canal

By RICHARD FORD

AN AUSTRIAN tourist on holiday in London was raped violently and repeatedly by eight teenage boys and then thrown naked into a canal, an Old Bailey jury was told yesterday.

The 32-year-old woman, a mother of two, swam for her life after the racially motivated attack only hours after she arrived in London last September. She survived only because "she separated her mind from her body as much as she could", the court heard.

The woman, from Vienna, went for a midnight walk near her hotel in King's Cross, but got lost. She met the eight youths, aged 14 to 17, who invited her to a party. She told them in halting English that it was not a good idea but walked with them towards the canal. She was unconcerned, because they were so young.

John Bevan, for the prosecution, said that when she reached Regent's Canal off York Way she was dragged 200 yards along the towpath and raped for 45 minutes. He said the attack had almost all the "worst features of multiple rape by multiple rapists". She was kicked, punched and subjected to a series of sexual indignities.

Seven of the teenagers admitted the rape but another, now aged 15, denies three charges of rape, indecent

assault and robbing the woman of a jacket and a belt. The youth cannot be named for legal reasons. At the time of the attack the oldest was 17, four were 16 and the others 14.

Mr Bevan said: "It may be she was naive, maybe she simply thought London was a safe place for a woman abroad at night. She was sadly mistaken."

He added: "She was approached and, as she thought, idly chatted to by a group of eight people she regarded as children." He told the court that during the attack she repeatedly heard the words "white bitch". The 14-year-old ringleader, who yesterday admitted rape, said to her: "Now, the party's going to begin."

Many, if not all, of the gang raped her more than once and the attack continued after she was held against a wall near the canal. Mr Bevan said the ordeal ended when she was asked whether she wanted to go for a swim. She said no.

"She was thrown into the canal. She survived. Perhaps it is a tribute to her toughness and good sense that she did, once she realised that resistance was hopeless and indeed dangerous."

She swam to safety on the other side of the canal and was able to attract the attention of a security guard, who telephoned the police. Speaking through an interpreter, the woman told the court that after a day of shopping, sightseeing and having dinner with friends she decided to go for a walk at about midnight to stretch her legs.

She had not been frightened when first approached by the youths because they were "friendly and nice" towards her. She said that as they dragged her along the canal bank she thought they were going to rob her. "Then they picked me up off the ground. Two picked me up by the arms and two by the legs. Four were holding me up and another group were tearing my clothes off me."

She said she was very frightened and realised what was going to happen. "I kept trying to think if there was any way I could get away, but there was no hope."

The woman told the jury that she was raped by each boy "several times", one after the other, and forced into other sexual acts while the others held her down.

She said she was asked if she could swim and said she could not, in the hope that they would throw her in the water. "They raped me a little more and they were pushing me towards the water at this point. They pushed me in."

The case continues.



A woven cap and multi-coloured sweater epitomised the Todd Oldham collection



A Lauren evening gown

Oldham livens up New York

FROM HEATH BROWN
IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK fashion week is renowned for practical, pared-down clothes. So it was a relief to come across a catwalk collection that crossed all the boundaries of good taste.

Todd Oldham banished grey and black in favour of colour that hit between the eyes. Leopard print clashed with Indian motifs: fake fur mixed with indigo denim and swirling sequins.

What a contrast with Ralph Lauren, whose smooth, sharp ready-to-wear collection at his Madison Avenue headquarters was inspired by New York's Art Deco architecture.

Man jailed for hammer attack on family

By A STAFF REPORTER

A MAN was jailed for life yesterday for a hammer attack in which a woman died and three children were seriously injured.

Dale Mandley, 33, killed Phyllis Minney before setting on her daughter, Phyllis, 13, son Paul, 12, and their friend, Victoria Hatfield, 13, who was staying the night. She will never fully recover, Reading Crown Court was told.

The court was told that Mandley had driven to Wokingham, Berkshire, last July after his girlfriend Michelle, Mrs Minney's daughter, ended their relationship. After cutting the telephone wires to the house, Mandley went inside and chatted to Mrs Minney.

The children were rescued by their mother that Mandley had arrived at the house for a chat. Mrs Minney, 48, then went downstairs and was struck at least 17 times with the hammer.

Susan Reed, for the prosecution, said Mandley then turned his attention to the children. Victoria was struck repeatedly about the head. Miss Reed said: "Phyllis [junior] ran to the bathroom and then her brother Paul came into the room. Mandley hit Paul on the head with the hammer."

Mandley admitted murdering Mrs Minney and three counts of grievous bodily harm with intent on the three children. Mr Justice Alliott told him it was unlikely that he would ever be released.

Net saves disabled Scrabble player

By TIM JONES

A DISABLED man triggered an international rescue yesterday after collapsing while playing Scrabble on the Internet. As he lay on the floor of his home in Didcot, Oxfordshire, John Elliott, 24, managed to tap out a message: "I have fallen and can't move. Please get help for me."

Before he was found five hours later, the hunt had involved Interpol and several police forces. But it was a freelance journalist, John Hawkins, who found Mr Elliott after getting his number from directory inquiries.

Mr Elliott, who has cerebral palsy, thought that he had been playing Scrabble with a woman in Canada when he collapsed, but it had been with a woman in Chicago. She read his message and sent out a group call to other Internet users, asking if they knew his name and address.

While police in America and Canada faxed Interpol, the woman called Gloucestershire police. They contacted Mr Elliott's Internet provider in the Isle of Man who gave them the addresses of John Elliotts in the area. As officers visited them, Mr Hawkins, with one call, found his man.

Dutch halt £100m drugs-ring trial of millionaire Briton

FROM MARK FULLER IN THE HAGUE

THE trial of a 33-year-old Briton, alleged to have masterminded one of Europe's biggest drugs rings, was adjourned by a Dutch court yesterday after it was claimed that evidence had been obtained illegally.

A court in The Hague referred the case against the Liverpool millionaire businessman Curtis Warren back to the examining magistrate to clarify defence counsel claims that evidence had been collected and processed illegally in a joint operation by British and Dutch customs and police.

The six-month operation, codenamed Crayfish, resulted in the arrest in The Netherlands last October of Mr Warren, six other Britons and one Colombian, and the seizure of huge quantities of cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and hashish with a street value of about £100 million.

In a bizarre exposure of the lack of integrated European legislation on criminal intelligence activities, the defence claimed that raids carried out in The Netherlands were based on information gathered in Britain through illegal telephone-tapping. The court was told that British customs and police officers had denied

Wife 'took poisoned tea to help research'

By DAREH GREGORIAN

A MAN accused of trying to poison his wife with rat-killer was actually carrying out experiments on preventing strokes and acting with her consent, a court was told yesterday.

William Down was said to have become obsessed about his health and to have embarked on amateur research into the anticoagulant drug warfarin, found in rat poison.

His wife Linda, 50, has told Northampton Crown Court that she became suspicious after finding "green bits" in her early morning tea, which tasted odd.

Stephen Crouch, for the defence, said Mrs Down had been given a safe dose of the poison with her knowledge. The drug turned the tea blue-green, Mr Crouch said, and "it is impossible to think anybody would be fooled. Tea is not by its nature blue."

He suggested that Mrs Down may have accused her husband of trying to poison her to force him into a better divorce settlement.

Mr Down, of Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire, denies attempting unlawfully to administer a poison. The case continues.

Maths solves great caravan riddle

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

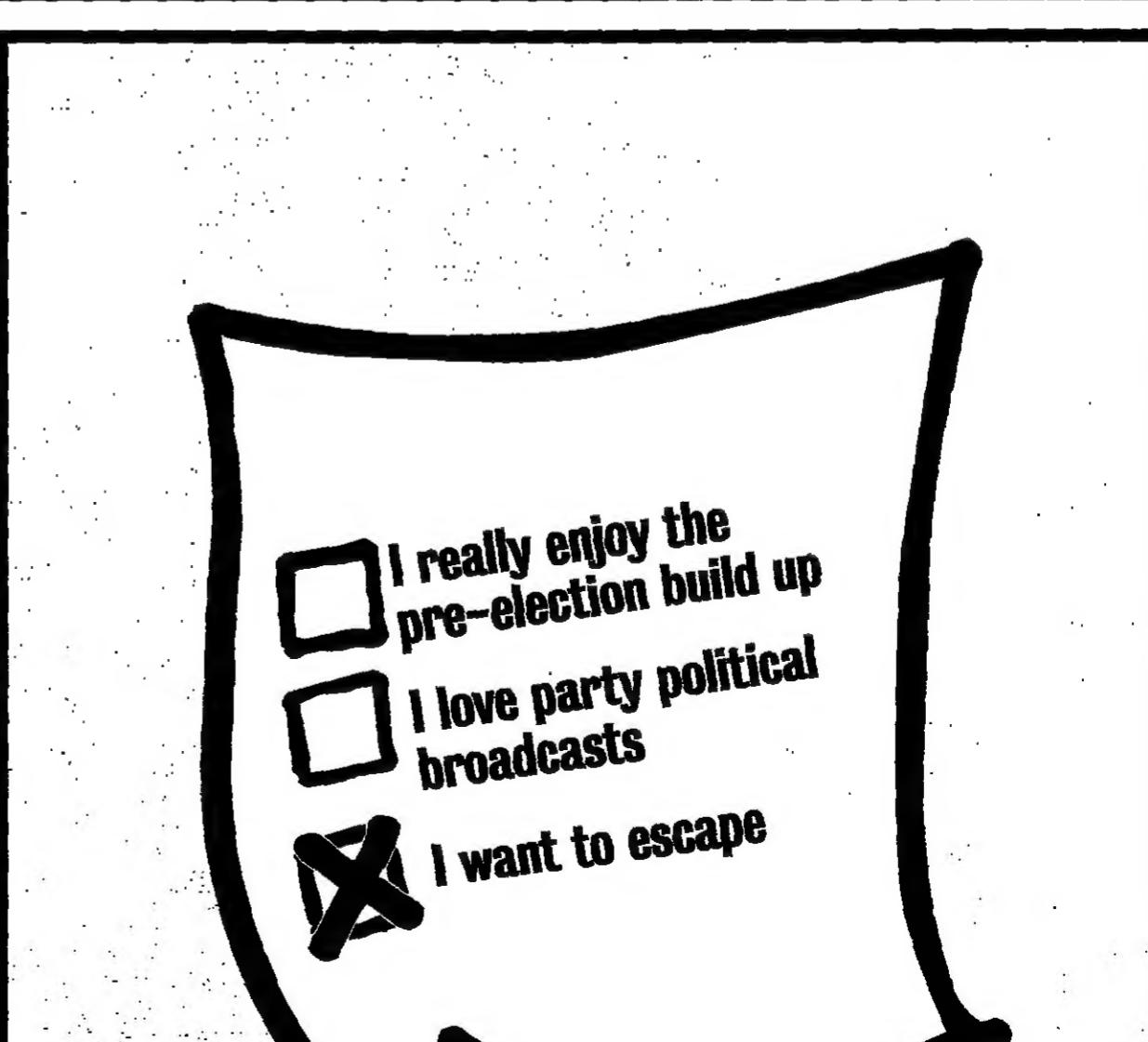
MATHEMATICS has come to the aid of a woman stumped by a perennial problem for caravan-owners: how big a caravan can fit in a parking space?

The worried owner, Mrs K. Walker, already had a caravan 16ft 8in long, but fancied a bigger one. To reach the parking space behind her home the caravan had to be pushed up a drive by hand, around a corner past her house and around a second corner past the garage. How large could her new mobile home be, she asked *Practical Caravan*.

The magazine approached

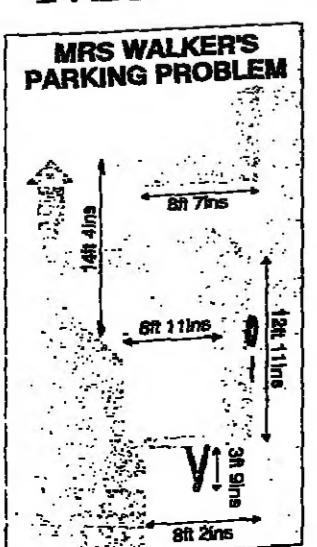
Mensa without success, then turned to Napier University in Edinburgh. The letter landed on the desk of Judy Goldfinch, senior lecturer in mathematics. "It was a challenge," she said. "I know nothing about caravans, but I had to give it a try."

In *Mathematics Today* she produces her solution, and urges other mathematicians to tackle the problem. Treating the caravan as a rectangular box with two wheels and an A-frame at the front bearing a third small wheel, Dr Goldfinch worked out the equations governing the movement of the caravan



As polling day looms, the backbiting, bickering and political wrangling get worse. So if you've got election boredom rather than election fever, escape on Eurostar. A week in Paris in the spring certainly beats a week in politics. And politicians? They'll still be here when you get back.

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I like philosophy because you can take your thoughts high!

Saturday in THE TIMES

How philosophy for children could change the world in

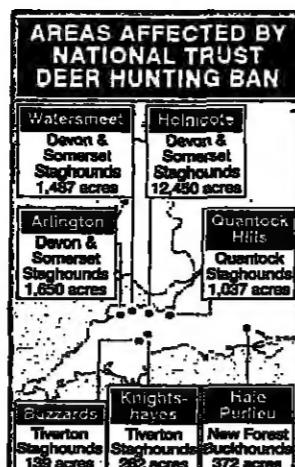
National Trust may ban stag hunts after report on cruelty

BY MICHAEL HORNBY
COUNTRYSIDE
CORRESPONDENT

THE National Trust is poised to ban deer-hunting with hounds on its land after a two-year scientific study released yesterday showed that the sport causes the animals unacceptable suffering.

Hunted deer suffered the same levels of stress as deer that had been severely injured in accidents, according to the report by Patrick Bateson, Professor of Ethology [animal behaviour] at Cambridge University.

Charles Nunnelley, chairman of the trust, which commissioned the report, said that the ban would be recommended to the charity's 52-member ruling council at a meeting in London today. The recommendation is that licences permitting hunting on trust land should not be renewed when they expire at the end of April. The council is expected to endorse the action.



Mr Nunnelley said: "We believe that the Government should now set up an expert group to investigate whether there are similar stresses to other animals."

The Masters of Deer Hounds Association, representing the four deer hunts in England, was meeting last night in emergency session to

decide how to respond to the threat to their sport. None of the hunts uses trust land exclusively and, with the possible exception of the Quantock Staghounds, all would be able to continue hunting.

The League Against Cruel Sports said it was "overjoyed" at the conclusions of the report. Graham Sirl, its chief representative in the West Country, said: "There is no justification on any grounds whatsoever for the tremendous suffering caused to hunted deer. We call on the Government to abolish deer hunting at the earliest opportunity."

Janet George, of the British Field Sports Society, said: "We are surprised and shocked by the findings of the report. Obviously the stag hunts will have to consider their future. We do not see any immediate application of these findings to fox-hunting."

Professor Bateson said it should not be assumed that



The Devon and Somerset Staghounds. It would be able to continue hunting, despite a National Trust ban

other hunted animals, such as foxes, would necessarily show the same level of stress as deer because of their different behaviour and ecology. But anyone who took part in deer-hunting from now on would be doing something that was knowingly cruel". The professor said he had approached the study with an open mind but had been astonished by the results and had come to the inescapable conclusion that hunting deer with hounds should end. "Hunting deer can longer be justified on welfare grounds, given the

standards applied in other fields such as transport and slaughter of farm animals, the use of animals in research, racing events and so on," he said. "The levels of stress were far above what would be seen in these areas."

Deer-hunting in England involves chasing the animals with hounds and horse-mounted huntsmen until the animals become tired and are brought to bay, when they are shot by marksmen. The season runs from August until the end of April. In Scotland deer are pursued on foot by stalkers and shot.

In 1990 trust members voted narrowly to ban deer-hunting, but the ruling council decided not to implement the ban because only about 135,000 of the two million trust members eligible to vote took part. The council also said

then it could not act because of lack of clear scientific evidence that deer-hunting was cruel.

The ban, if it goes ahead, would cover about 17,000 acres of trust land. About 10,000 acres of this was donated to the trust by the late Sir Richard Acland in 1944 with a "memorandum of wishes" that hunting should continue.

Mr Nunnelley said yesterday, however, that Sir Richard's son, Sir John Acland, had informed them that his father would not have wished to maintain that stipulation in the light of the latest scientific evidence.

About 1,800 acres on Exmoor, given by another donor in the 1930s, was covered by a "positive covenant" in favour of hunting, Mr Nunnelley said, and this meant the trust had no legal power to stop hunting there.



A stag being hunted on trust land in Somerset

The findings that surprised authors of animal study

BY OUR COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

RED deer hunted with hounds are driven to "pathological extremity", suffering levels of stress far in excess of the normal limits for their species. This is the main conclusion of the report by Professor Bateson, who said that he was surprised the findings were so clear-cut.

According to the report, the data showed that the hunted animals are extremely frightened, pushing themselves as much as they are able and risking a great deal to save their lives.

Professor Bateson and Elizabeth Bradshaw, a research associate, measured increases in stress-related hormones and other changes in the blood and muscles of deer.

Dr Bradshaw spent 18 months on Exmoor following the hunt and taking blood samples from shot animals.

The main findings are:

□ Levels of stress hormones were as high in hunted deer as in deer which had been severely injured by shooting or in car accidents and up to 15 times higher than in non-hunted animals.

□ Carbohydrate resources for the muscles were totally depleted in deer hunted for long periods.

□ Acid levels in the blood, the product of extreme exertion, rose dramatically and red blood cells started to break up soon after a hunt started.

□ In longer hunts there was leakage of enzymes from muscles, causing muscle damage.

Therefore, we believe that red deer are unlikely to be well adapted, either by their evolutionary history or by their own individual experience, to cope with prolonged chases. The long hunts with hounds should not be regarded as natural.

The scientists say it cannot be assumed that the same pattern of stress would necessarily be observed in other hunted species, which exhibit different behaviour and physiology.

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Sociologists run their measuring tapes over female fashion and lower-division soccer



Gascogne, left, and Shearer: wrong impression

Not all footballers are having a ball

FOOTBALLERS stuck in the gloom of Division Three and the lesser leagues are suffering from "Shearerisation" and "Gascognisation", according to a sociologist (Paul Wilkinson writes).

Craig Gurney believes that the first means that they get no public sympathy because everyone thinks they earn vast amounts of money, while the other reflects the public perception that players are always involved in scandal.

Mr Gurney, who lectures on housing at the University of Wales, Cardiff, told the meeting: "Because of this, empathy for professional footballers seems limited and explains more than anything else why

they remain outside the sociological imagination."

Discussing the effects of transfers, he said nothing was known about the problems footballers faced in moving homes. In his interviews with players from less fashionable sides, he noted a common complaint that "for every Shearer, there are many more people like me".

He said that the public perception of footballers as an undeserving, super-rich group was wrong. "Male professional footballers are mundanely like workers in other occupations," Mr Gurney is working on a book about players' wives entitled *We're Not All Page 3 Girls*.

Football funding, page 19

Get a haircut to get ahead at work, say women high-flyers

By PAUL WILKINSON

WOMEN were told yesterday that if they wanted to get ahead in their careers they should get a haircut. And definitely not wear a cardigan.

A study of power-dressing among female high-achievers found that what they most feared was looking like a secretary; they might find themselves asked to make the coffee.

The other fear is looking like a secretary. They felt cardigan and jumpers would mean them being mistaken for a lowly clerical worker and they could be asked to make the coffee in the boardroom.

"Successful" women want status and power-dressing is one way to get it. They wear clothes that say "Take me seriously" and "Respect me". Men have always had a business outfit to identify themselves, and now it seems professional women have one too.

The typical outfit, particularly in the law and business, was quite conservative. "A tailored jacket with small shoulder pads, skirt or trousers, sensible shoes and subtle make-up are *de rigueur*. Hair should not be more than shoulder length because that would be too sexy."

Dressed in a smart tailored navy blue trouser suit and pale blue blouse, with dark brown hair cut to touch her

shoulders, Miss Entwistle, a lecturer at the University of North London, said: "Long hair is too feminine or 'girly'. The women I spoke to thought looking sexy was a bad thing, though looking attractive is fine. Women in a position of power in the boardroom, the law and politics do not want to look too sexy."

She added that power-dressing was a way for a woman to gain parity with men. More and more professional women were asking image consultants for tips on the right colours and the best make-up and hairstyle.

The 24 women Miss Entwistle spoke to agreed that they needed to "power-dress" to climb the professional ladder. "Some women who want to wear cardigans and jumpers at work have found they were told to dress smarter by their bosses," she said. "Power-dressing has helped women to move on and fashion themselves an image they never had before."

"Some women don't like it and feel it is imposed upon them, but they feel that to achieve, they have to dress this way. However, most say power-dressing gives them status, confidence and authority at work. My advice to any would-be career women going for an interview is: wear a jacket and make sure your make-up is not too garish."



Dressed for success: Joanne Entwistle yesterday

Rapist is questioned on murder

A man serving life for rape was being questioned yesterday by police in Darlington, Co Durham, about the murder of Ann Heron, 44, near the town in August 1990. Philip Hann, 29, who was given a life sentence in 1994 for a rape in the area, was taken to Darlington from Wakefield prison.

Mrs Heron was murdered while sunbathing in her garden. Despite the biggest investigation ever undertaken by Durham police, no one has been charged with the murder.

E-type death

A man who had saved up for years to buy an E-type Jaguar died in the passenger seat of an open-top model after a mechanic taking him on a test drive braked to avoid a bird and lost control at No Man's Heath, Chilcote, Leicestershire. Police have appealed for witnesses to the accident.

Driver attacked

The driver of a classic car was beaten round the head with a metal tool in a "road rage" attack outside Eastbourne General Hospital, East Sussex. It is thought that his attacker was annoyed because he had not spotted the flip-out indicator arms on the 1954 Hillman Bullnose Minx.

Soldier jailed

Private Simon Blake, 24, of The Prince of Wales Regiment, based at Canterbury, was jailed by Maidstone Crown Court for two years after brandishing an imitation handgun, while drunk, at two of his girlfriend's colleagues. He was upset at her recent treatment at work.

Cliff top fall

A woman aged 57 fell 200ft to her death while walking with her husband on an unclipped cliff. He raised the alarm at a house close to the scene, near Deal, Kent. Police said that there were no suspicious circumstances. An inquest will be held.

Sailor honoured

The solo yachtsman Peter Goss, 35, received a Royal Ocean Racing Club trophy for his rescue of Raphael Dinelli in the Southern Ocean last December. He is also to receive the Legion d'honneur, France's highest bravery award.

Pulling the rug

Police in Rainham, Kent, hired eight wigs for an identity parade so that a building society cashier could pick out a raider who had disguised himself with fake permed hair, sunglasses and a baseball cap. The accused was later jailed for 12 years.

Navy man banned for hitting ref

A PETTY officer in the Royal Navy was banned yesterday from attending all football matches for 15 months and fined £2,750 after assaulting Football League referee.

Darren Williams, 29, of Christchurch, Dorset, attacked Ian Cruickshanks during a match between Bury and Bournemouth in February. Bury Magistrates' Court was told. Mr Cruickshanks had a four-inch scratch to his neck and shoulder.

Philip Thompson, in mitigation, said that Williams went on to the pitch because he wanted to speak to the referee. He was stopped and led away by stewards. He knew he was wrong and apologised at once.

Williams, who is an amateur referee, has been banned from officiating for the Navy and in local games. He faces Navy discipline and will not be eligible for promotion for at least a further three years.

Williams, who pleaded guilty, was fined £2,000 for assault and £750 for invading the pitch, with £45 costs and £100 compensation.

Scientists target inescapable bullet

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

SMART bullets that will track the movement of targets as they try to escape are being developed by scientists. An innovative nose cone, capable of hundreds of movements a second, will enable snipers to pick off human targets several kilometres away, it is claimed. The ammunition, guided by a laser-tracking system of the type used by the RAF in the Gulf War, is being developed for the US Air Force. The researchers initially concentrated on bullets up to 20 millimetres fired by aircraft, but they are already working on smaller versions. The system is called barrel-

launched adaptive munitions (Blam). Ron Barrett, an aerospace engineer at Auburn University in Alabama, who is testing prototypes, said: "The way pilots guarantee a hit is by filling the sky with lead. With Blam, pilots would need only one bullet to get a hit."

The direction of the bullet is controlled by the new nose cone, which contains tiny piezoelectric rods or tendons which can shorten or lengthen hundreds of times a second. "At supersonic speed, very small angles generate huge amounts of lift," Dr Barrett told *New Scientist*.

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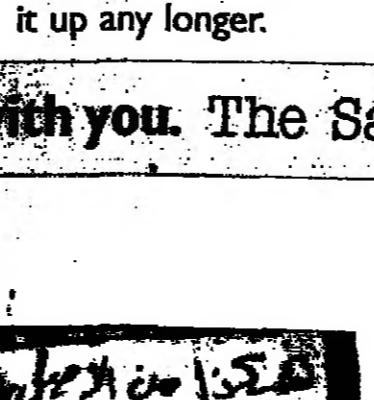
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ELECTION 97

POLL DAY
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A bravura day in the life of the deputy PM

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The man who
hopes to
capture Exeter
- Matthew
Paris p10

Why are we
turning off the
TV news?
- Alex Frean
p13

The battle
of the air
waves
- Peter
Barnard p14

'I leave the BBC and
its standards decline'
- Martin Bell

Charles Bremner - p14

Tory horror show we've seen before

THE party election broadcast said: "Imagine if the polls were right, imagine if they won the election." And, for once, the polls were right; the opposition did win the election. There followed a catalogue of horrors.

They put the tax up almost as soon as they got in," recalled an elderly man with bitterness in last night's broadcast. One year after the election a woman bewailed her lost job. A second complained that her son had been jobless for more than a year, and had no hope of finding one because of the minimum wage.

Three years later, unemployment was still soaring, the cost of living had risen by £30 a week and mortgage rates had "gone through the roof". And to make matters worse, the new government had changed the voting system to make it "much more difficult to get them out again".

By the time the new party had been in power for ten years, everything had gone to the dogs. The country was again in the grip of strikes. Schools were closing up and down the country, mortgages were again "going through the roof" and unemployment was again "soaring".

A hideous prospect, yet absolutely credible. How do I know? Because all these disasters really did befall Britain



Anatole Kaletsky
believes the Saatchi
brothers have scored a
succession of political
own goals in the
visionary style of their
latest Tory broadcast

after the voters took their reckless plunge into the unknown. To be precise, within one, three and ten years of

May 3, 1979, when the people elected a Tory Government led by the untested Margaret Thatcher and put into parliament for the first time an obscure bank official named John Major.

Consider the evidence. The Tories certainly "put up the tax almost as soon as they got in". In his mini-budget less than two months after the election, Sir Geoffrey Howe stunned the nation by hoisting Value Added Tax from 8 to 15 per cent and, in direct contradiction to his party's election promises, lifting the overall tax burden by 1 per cent in the 12 months before the election.

By 1989 the direst predictions made in the political broadcast had been fulfilled. Strikes were breaking out again after just three years of quiescence: the 4.1 million working days lost through strikes was the highest since the end of the miners' strike in 1984-85.

Mortgage rates had jumped from 9.5 in 1988 to 13.5 per cent in 1989 and were on their way to a record 15 per cent. Unemployment had fallen from its three million peak to

just below two million, but was soon to turn sharply upwards and hit 3 million again. Even inflation, which the Tories had chosen as the "judge and jury" of their economic record, was not much better in May 1989 than it had been ten years earlier and was rapidly moving up.

As for the school closures foreshadowed in last night's election broadcast, the Tories certainly know whereof they speak: they shut down 5 per cent of all primary schools and 10 per cent of secondary schools between 1982 and 1989.

In fact, of the 12 prophecies of doom I noted in the Tory Jeremiad, there were only two to which the Tories did not themselves succumb in their first ten years: electoral reform and the introduction of a minimum wage. And even on these issues, a less lenient umpire could award own goals against the Saatchi brothers who masterminded the Tory broadcast.

The Labour promise of a referendum on proportional representation, for example, would emphatically not make it harder to vote a Labour government out of office. On the contrary, the main objection to PR is that it undermines stable government by letting small minorities evict major parties from power. What PR would make much harder is the achievement of the kind of political monopoly which the Tories have enjoyed for 18 years on the basis of just 44 per cent of the popular vote.

That leaves the introduction of a minimum wage. There is certainly nothing comparable to this economic illiteracy in the Tories' own record, but it may still be a mistake to try to frighten voters about Labour's effect on unemployment among the young. Not only is this bound to remind the public of the Tories' own abject failure on this issue. It may also draw attention to one of the few economic pledges which Tony Blair has made crystal clear.

A Labour government, he



Pete Wilson and wife in 1995 when he announced his attempt at the presidency

says, would guarantee a subsidised job or a training place for every young person who had been unemployed for more than 6 months. This may or may not be a sensible idea from an economic standpoint, but it has been thoroughly costed and the source of the money (the windfall profits tax) has been identified.

In sum, the vague and emotive accusations made in

tonight's Tory broadcast bore no particular relation to the dangers posed by a future Labour government. There are many potentially frightening hints and gaps in Labour policies on every subject ranging from privatisation of pensions and financing of higher education to the future of Europe and defence.

But the Saatchis will have to try harder if they want to

frighten the voters without reminding them of the mixed record of the Tory years. All they come up with tonight is barroom blather. Such accusations can always be levelled against any government and justified with selective statistics — even against a government with as many genuine achievements to its credit as the Tories in the Thatcher decade.

The Governor fought back with television adverts that pictured California under Kathleen Brown. Immigrants from Mexico would flood the state. Crime figures would explode under her watch. The slow improvement in the economy would be reversed.

The strategy paid splendid dividends. Wilson not only recovered but won by 14 points on polling day.



Actors in tonight's Conservative Party election broadcast live out the 'nightmare' of rising taxes and unemployment after a Labour victory

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Adrian Rogers says homosexuality is "disease-ridden"

Lonely Tory faces his worst fears incarnate

THE lonely-looking candidate was carrying a small soap box and flanked by two nervous and embarrassed young minders. "I know you," he said. "you're the man who writes unpleasant things about me in *The Times*. I hardly think you're going to be impartial here. You don't give a man a fair chance."

This was the Conservative candidate for Exeter, a Tory marginal. Dr Adrian Rogers — he of the "homosexuality is a sterile, disease-ridden occupation" opinions — did indeed know me. I have written in the past of the difficulty Tory voters in Exeter who are gay, or tolerant of others who are, may have in voting for him this time.

The contest is made the more piquant by the fact that his Labour opponent, Ben Bradshaw, is openly gay. "Bent Ben," Rogers has called him. Worse, Bradshaw works for the BBC. Worse still, he comes from London. Rogers, a GP who has led the Conservative Family Campaign, finds within his sights the very evil he has campaigned against for years.

The campaign is not going well. When Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, visited Exeter recently, there was, sadly, no time to meet the Tory candidate. The outgoing Tory MP, Sir John Hannam, has found it inconvenient to put in more than a token effort on his successor's behalf. Ben Bradshaw, meanwhile, is basking (if we may put it thus) in Dr Rogers's disapproval.

Bradshaw is a leggy, fresh-faced, floppy-haired young man with a quick mind, a pleasant manner, a ready smile, a vaunting ambition, unlimited energy, a



MATTHEW PARRIS

merry laugh and a strategic sense-of-humour-failure wherever human looks risky.

"Really nice to meet you," "isn't it hot today?" "Absolutely."

"Lovely to meet," "all the best" ... Mr Bradshaw was canvassing Church Road in new-Labour-Speak "blitzing and voter-IDing".

"I'm a Liberal, really," said one lady householder, abashed.

"Absolutely. But you know, that's a little bit of a waste."

He combines an eagerness to gather us all up with an unseemly vagueness as to where he means to take us. The project was Victory. Full stop. As he leapt down the street, darting this way and that ahead of the throng, he reminded me of a Pied Piper of Hamelin.

"I meet a lot of Liberal Democrats voting for me. Here's one of my posters, in case you get more committed. Then you can stick it up."

"Stick it up where?" I asked.

Sense-of-humour failure. "Soft Labour, former Liberal, eminently squeezable," he instructed his aide briskly, diving for another door.

"I don't want that Common Market," said another woman, but Bradshaw changed the subject. Whatever people asked, he switched deftly to the NHS and Education. Absolutely. It was as though he were programmed.

"I'm a capitalist," barked one elderly lady, round her door. "Home rule for England! No more money for Scotland!"

"I'm very religious," he told us, pointing. "That's my church. Every Sunday. Six old ladies and me." "Seven old ladies, then," I said. Sense-of-humour-failure. Absolutely. We were nearing the Cathedral, outside which Tony Blair was to speak after lunch. As we entered a pub, one youth, mistaking him for Blair, muttered "Tony Blair. Full of shit."

"Isn't it lovely?" said Bradshaw, indicating the Gothic architecture outside. "You wouldn't believe it was going to be Labour after May 1."

He ordered a pint of shandy and a cornish pasty.

Through the plate glass we had seen Dr Rogers. He had arrived to canvass the square but seemed unsettled by Bradshaw's appearance in the pub. It was then that I had stepped outside to meet him.

"You should be ashamed," Rogers had said, ending our conversation. "Go home." I was not ashamed, but something disquieted me, attached as I was to Ben Bradshaw's self-confident claque and sense of approaching victory. I felt that the isolated Dr Rogers was rather brave.



Ben Bradshaw. Dr Rogers's openly gay Labour opponent

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Tories claw back support as managers of the economy

Peter Riddell on MORI poll findings which suggest that the voters are beginning to focus on the election issues

THE Conservatives have sharply improved their rating over the past few months as the party best able to manage the economy and to handle taxation, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

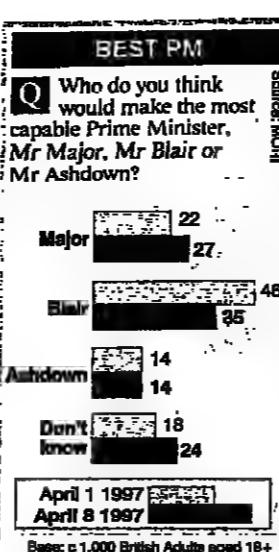
The poll, based on interviews conducted on Tuesday, shows that Labour remains well ahead on the key issues which people regard as "very important" in helping to decide how they vote, such as healthcare, education and unemployment. But the Tories are in the lead as the best party on the next two issues in ranking of importance: law and order and economic management. Out of the 16 issues rated as very important, Labour is ahead on eight, the Tories on seven and the Liberal Democrats on one (protecting the natural environment).

As significant is the big relative improvement in the Tories' standing as the best

party on taxation. In February, Labour was in the lead by 33 to 31 per cent among those regarding the issue as very important in deciding their votes. Now, the Tories are ahead by 41 to 26 per cent. The Tories have also improved their standing on managing the economy: some 45 per cent now rate them as the best party, against 23 per cent for Labour. There has been a similar shift on Europe, where the Tories now enjoy a two-to-one lead, whereas the two parties were level-pegging a year ago.

These shifts suggest that the start of the campaign has started to focus the public's minds on the issues and that some of the Tory propaganda on the economy may have started to have an impact.

If the current views of all voters, rather than just those mentioning a particular issue as important, are compared with their attitudes at the same stage of the 1992 general

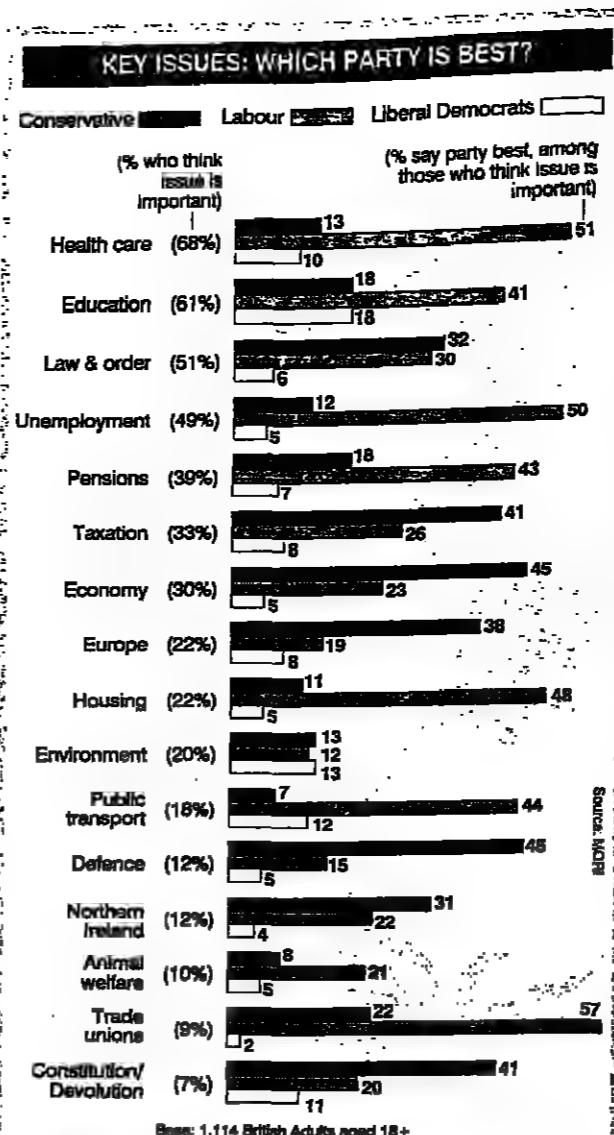


questions have been relatively stable over the past 18 months with between 55 and 58 per cent agreeing that Labour is ready to form the next government (55 per cent now) and between 53 and 56 per cent agreeing that Mr Blair is ready to become Prime Minister (53 per cent now).

In each case, about a third of the public disagree with the proposition that Labour is ready to form the next Government and Mr Blair to be Prime Minister. These figures still indicate that the majority of people are now prepared for a change of government.

The poll confirms the fluctuations in support for the Referendum Party, now put at 1 per cent, compared with a rounded up 2 per cent a week ago and a peak of 3 per cent before Easter.

□ MORI interviewed 1,114 adults at 83 sampling points across Britain on Tuesday, April 8. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they will not vote (8 per cent), those who say they are undecided (12 per cent) and those who refuse to say (4 per cent).



Apathy worse than in 1992

FEWER people say that they are certain to vote than at the same stage of the last general election, according to the MORI poll.

Some 62 per cent of the public say they are certain to vote, compared with 67 per cent three weeks before polling day in 1992. nearer to polling day, the proportion saying they are certain to vote tends to rise. The turnout was 78 per cent last time.

Young people are now much less likely than the middle-aged to say they are certain to vote: 36 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds say they are certain to vote — half the proportion of those aged over 55.

Three-quarters or more of those who have deserted the Tories since 1992 or who have switched behind Labour say they are certain to vote.

Some 28 per cent of those expressing a party preference say they may change their mind before polling day. This compares with 16 per cent at the end of the last campaign. If the undecided are included, this suggests that a third of the public are floating voters.

Parties back new legal network on human rights

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

POLITICIANS from the main political parties are among top QC's and solicitors backing the launch tonight of a new legal network in support of the human rights group Liberty.

The Conservative Sir Ivan Lawrence, QC, the Labour peer Lord Archer of Sandwell, QC, Alex Carlile, QC, and Lord Lester of Herne Hill, QC (Liberal Democrats) have signed up as founding members of Lawyers for Liberty.

Barristers and solicitors joining the network will take a leading role in Liberty's work of protecting and extending human rights, as well as contributing financially to its work. They will be involved in drafting amendments to Bills helping Liberty's litigation strategy and considering responses to changes in the law.

Others who back the network include Tony Grint, president of the Law Society, and Robert Owen, QC, chairman of the Bar. Lord Brown Wilkinson, the law lord who stirred opposition to the Police Bill by drawing attention to provisions that he said threatened civil liberties, will speak at the launch.

John Wadham, director of Liberty, said: "As one of the UK's leading civil liberties

and human rights organisations, Liberty has been working to protect rights for over 60 years. During this time lawyers have always had an essential role to play. Lawyers for Liberty will put this on a formal footing."

He said the network's aims were two-fold. "Partly it is about fund-raising but more importantly it is to get help from lawyers with the wider aspects of our work. We have always succeeded in finding top lawyers to help with litigation but we would like to involve lawyers more in policy and lobbying work."

□ MPs taking bribes, as alleged in the "cash for questions" affair, could for the first time face criminal charges and fines or prison under proposals being considered by all the main parties. John Major said yesterday that he would "certainly examine the question of whether bribery [involving MPs] should be a criminal offence".

If bribery had been a criminal offence, some of the central allegations in the "cash for questions" affair could have been considered by the Crown Prosecution Service rather than by the internal disciplinary committees.

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Wily Cook unwilling to be saddled with his horse's guilt



PETER BARNARD

AT LAST this election campaign has a real issue: does Robin Cook take part in fox-hunting, or does he just ride horses that take part in fox-hunting? Is riding a horse that follows hounds the same as taking part in fox-hunting? Can a horse be guilty of fox-hunting but its rider not guilty?

I mused on these matters after an otherwise humdrum launch of the BBC's *Election Call*, which began yesterday and runs every weekday until polling day. The return of *Election Call*, in mothballs since

1992, means the return of the dread word simulcast, for the programme is simultaneously broadcast on BBC1 and Radio 4. So you had the choice of looking at Cook, or not looking at him.

I looked, but used the radio sound, a technique taken from football commentaries. The first half was dull, although there was a goalmouth scramble when Cook nearly accused a caller of being a Tory stooge. Heaven forfend.

Clive Baxter from Derbyshire, had called up to accuse

Labour of "sping Tory policies", which raised the alarming prospect of a member of the public who had actually read the Labour manifesto. Cook started: "I think, Clive, you've got two separate briefs from Central Office..."

Peter Sissons, the presenter, said: "You're not accusing him of being a Central Office stooge, are you?" and Baxter interjected: "Well, I'm most certainly not a member of the Conservative Party." Cook had the last word on Tory membership, but spoilt it by mixing up Clive Baxter's

name. "Well, they're a diminishing band, Mr Clive..." After that, there was a slight frisson when Eric Maddocks from Taunton wanted to know if Labour MPs' sponsorship by unions was not "money for questions on the grand scale".

Cook replied that he was "connected" with RMT, the rail union, but "it is not sponsorship, it's an agreement between the unions and my constituency party". The rail union "might take a different view [on rail privatisation] from that that is currently being expressed by the

Labour leadership". It was unclear whether Cook and the Labour leadership are one and the same.

And so to Peter Evelyn of London, Mr Evelyn, unusually for a city dweller, was in favour of field sports and said: "I understand you are as well." There was little chance of the position being so simple.

Cook: "I've never hunted, I've never shot, I've never fished."

Sissons: "But you ride."

Cook: "Oh I ride, yes, but lots of people ride who never ride to hounds, I thoroughly enjoy riding,

Sissons: So you don't ride to hounds?"

Cook: "No, I'll freely admit that I have ridden horses that have followed hounds. I hope that doesn't make me guilty."

The image of the dapper Foreign Secretary-in-waiting out for a canter when his horse sniffs hounds and dashes off in pursuit, oblivious to every tug on the reins, is quite engrossing — unless the scene is a metaphor, with the unions as the horse.

Radio, page 46

Famous Tory names hope familiarity breeds intent

Damian Whitworth meets Norman Lamont, and Michael Horsnell meets David Amess, who have switched constituencies after boundary changes



Lamont: thinks Labour surge may help him

THEY are two familiar faces in new places: one-time Tory heroes who have moved on after boundary changes left their old seats unsafe or non-existent.

In this election, the former Chancellor Norman Lamont, once John Major's right-hand man, is standing to become a North Yorkshire MP after losing his place in the Home Counties. And David Amess, once the champion of Basildon Man, hopes the coat is clear for him to win the safer seat of Southend West, long guarded by an old Tory dynasty.

Mr Lamont has mostly spurned offers of local TV debates, newspaper interviews, even photo calls, and is confining himself to voters' doorsteps in Harrogate and Knaresborough. He seems to have realised that he has a fight on his hands protecting a Tory majority of 9,211.

Last week, the former MP for the now vanished constituency of Kingston upon

Harrogate, Norman was out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Mr Lamont clinched the nomination for Harrogate by just a handful of local party votes, after months of humiliating rejection by other Conservative Associations. But the Boundary Commission has caused upheaval here too, taking away affluent rural pockets from the constituency, which had remained a safe Tory seat for 23 years in the hands of Robert Banks, who lived in Suffolk.

The Liberal Democrats are rampant. Of the 35 councillors in the constituency, 28 are Liberal Democrats and only three Tory. Mr Lamont's key opponent is Phil Willis, a head teacher who has led the council since 1990. Mr Willis, 55, is comparing his own financial acumen with the local budget with Mr Lamont's days as Chancellor.

Mr Willis said: "I don't blame him entirely for Black

Thames he was in London while his Liberal Democrat opponents were canvassing tirelessly. Then *The Times* disclosed Mr Lamont's Big Idea: a panel including Lord Archer, Lord Lloyd-Webber and Lord Palumbo to advise on the future of the Harrogate area. The scheme was treated with moderate enthusiasm in the area. However, a weekend survey suggested that many

Labour supporters were planning to cast their votes for the Liberal Democrats in a tactical ploy. On Monday, Mr Lamont hit the streets again. Paddy Ashdown has also visited Harrogate, and took Mr Lamont as the starting point for his speech at a Westminster rally: "We really have got Norman Lamont on the run. After rejections from a dozen seats, he ended up in



Family tradition: Lady Ieagh campaigning in Southend in 1927. Below, her grandson and successor David Amess:

Wednesday, but I do blame him for tax promises he didn't keep and for VAT on fuel."

The Times finally tracked down Mr Lamont on his way back to his campaign headquarters after a pub lunch. He was then setting off to Knaresborough with his wife and party workers. He said he did not believe that newspaper

persuaded voters, and he wanted to spend time meeting constituents.

Eventually, he agreed to an interview: "I have been working exceedingly hard here for a year and a quarter and have met a huge number of people. When I was out today, I met a chap whom I had met three times before. I have been here every weekend apart from a handful, and in midweek quite a lot."

He said that he was especially interested in issues regarding the heritage of Harrogate, which was being developed by the Liberal Democrats. His own survey, he claimed, showed that the Labour vote was rising sharply, and those of the Lib Dems and the Tories were dropping. "And that is what I believe will happen." So the Labour rise would return him to Westminster.

Life is looking simpler for David Amess, described as the only Conservative to have moved nearer to Europe since the election was called. He has taken the "chicken run" from the concrete walkways of marginal new-town Essex for Southend West's Tory majority of 12,000, guarded by the Guinness-Amess dynasty for most of the century.

It was occupied by the former Cabinet minister Paul Channon for 38 years. Mr

Channon's grandfather, the Honourable R. E. C. L. Guinness, was elected in 1912. Mr Channon's grandmother, Lady Ieagh was elected in 1927, and went on to be chosen by Baldwin as the first woman to chair a party conference, because he thought it was going to be "difficult". The seat was passed to her son Sir Henry "Chips" Channon, and finally to Paul Channon at the age of 23, in 1959.

The contrast between the patrician figure of Mr Channon (Eton, Oxford and the Blues) and Mr Amess does not alarm the cockney ex-grammar schoolboy, whose parents worked as an electrician and a tea lady. At Ieagh Hall, his campaign headquarters, Mr Amess joked: "If I want to start a new family tradition, I could do one better. My son is also David Amess, although I am not encouraging him to go into politics."

Mr Channon served Southend well. It is rather different here from Basildon. It's a civilised area with traditions.

Mr Amess claims that far from leaving Basildon, where a notional 2.2 per cent swing would hand the seat to Labour, Basildon left him: "Even my headquarters and constituency association there are now in another constituency because of the boundary changes."

"It is no longer the same seat. I was the first and last MP for Basildon."



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Kohl's wise men urge two-year delay on euro

Chirac visits Bonn to heal differences

FROM DEBORAH COLLCUTT IN BONN

Two of Germany's "five wise men" have cast doubt on their Government's ability to fulfil entry criteria for economic and monetary union (EMU). Their misgivings emerged before talks in Bonn last night between Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, and President Chirac of France, aimed at patching up growing Franco-German differences over Europe.

Professor Herbert Hax, the president of the group of top five independent economists who advise the German Government, backed comments by Professor Rolf Pfefferkorn, his colleague. Professor Pfefferkorn said the start of EMU would have to be delayed by up to two years because of Bonn's strict interpretation of the Maastricht treaty entry criteria.

In an interview with Cologne's *Express* newspaper, Professor Pfefferkorn said this line of monetary policy was wise to a point, but not as regards reducing the budget deficit to 3 per cent of the gross domestic product this year in time for monetary union entry on January 1, 1999.

"As a softening of the convergence criteria is now out of the question, the single currency must be delayed for between one to two years," he said. The professor, who lectures in finance at Mainz University, said the Chancellor and Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, had more

room to play with than they allowed themselves.

Professor Hax, a lecturer in finance at Cologne University, echoed the views of his colleague in an interview in today's *Kölner/Bonner Rundschau* by saying it was too late to relax interpretation of the criteria.

"It is better to hang on the hardline approach and delay the start of the euro," he said, adding that if European Union members could agree to a relaxation of the convergence terms then they "should say so today, so that the countries can adjust".

He told the newspaper that it was unlikely Germany would fulfil the criteria in the present economic climate. "Other EU countries have the same problem and a single European currency with only a few participants makes no sense," he said.

The euro was one of the topics due for discussion in Bonn last night and President Chirac is sure to be unsettled by Professor Pfefferkorn's comments.

The junior coalition partners of Herr Kohl's Christian Union, the Free Democrats (FDP), met the Chancellor in Bonn on Tuesday to smooth over a rift between Herr Waigel and Klaus Kinkel, the FDP Foreign Minister.

"Along with other EU colleagues, you should get on with your job of concentrating on the political union and save



HERMANN J. KNIPPERTZ/AP

Helmut Kohl rings the bell to open yesterday's Cabinet meeting, while two top advisers were urging him to ring the changes on EMU

us your advice on the single European currency," Herr Waigel warned Herr Kinkel in response to a newspaper article quoting the Foreign Minister as saying Germany was at "the point of no return" with the euro.

Herr Waigel interpreted his colleague's comment as an attempt to indicate that Germany should soften its

stand on the stability criteria — a view described as "unnecessary and exaggerated" by the FDP. The Finance Minister denied reports that he had relaxed his efforts to match the budget to the 3 per cent target.

Sources in Bonn said the Government considered Herr Kinkel was making life hard by implying the criteria could be interpreted more loosely

when the Finance Minister and Chancellor have no intention, at present, of straying from the hardline approach.

International markets will be hoping for a statement from the Chancellor after his meeting with President Chirac to explain Germany's dogged policy on strict criteria compilation amid signs that it cannot meet it.

Professor Pfefferkorn said in view of the latest unemployment figures — a small monthly fall but a new March post-war record of 4.48 million or 11.7 per cent — Germany could easily fail to fulfil the criteria. "I predict average unemployment of 4.2 million in 1997, that is to say that no change in the trend can be achieved," he said. "Therefore it will be

difficult to reach the 3 per cent deficit criteria." He added that as the Government had ruled out further tax increases, public spending and welfare benefits would have to be drastically reduced.

During their informal talks, Herr Kohl and M Chirac are expected to discuss European Union reform plans and the expansion of Nato.

Nato deal paves way for French re-entry

BY MICHAEL EVANS

DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

PARIS is ready to resolve its dispute with the Americans over the command of Nato's southern Europe headquarters, which should guarantee France's reintegration into the alliance's military structure after an absence of 31 years.

The first stage in a deal between Washington and Paris emerged yesterday when it was confirmed that a Nato-Russia summit to sign a security charter will be held in Paris on May 27, if talks with Moscow are completed in time.

The choice of Paris for an event that will formalise a new strategic partnership between Nato and Russia is a significant boost for French prestige. It will also provide proof for the French that Nato has changed sufficiently since the end of the Cold War to justify France's return to the integrated structure which it left in March 1966.

The second part of the deal is expected to be a compromise under which the Americans will retain command of Allied Forces Southern Europe (Afsouth), based in Naples, but a European will be given a new four-star deputy commander post which will be responsible for all European force structures in the region.

France has been demanding that a European should be in command at Afsouth but the United States, which has the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean, has refused to relinquish control of the key headquarters command. French ministers said they would drop plans to reintegrate unless they got their way.

The anticipated deal with Paris will mean that France will formally announce its reintegration at the Nato summit in Madrid in July when invitations are to be made to Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to join the alliance.

Confirmation that Paris has been chosen for the Nato-Russia summit came from Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister, after talks yesterday with President Chirac. He said President Yeltsin had accepted an invitation to visit Paris on May 27.

Author aspires to Spanish H-free zone

FROM GILES TREMLIET
IN MADRID

SPANISH children may be dancing with joy but a proposal by Gabriel García Márquez, the Nobel laureate, to do away with spelling has caused consternation in the hallowed halls of the Royal Academy of Spain.

"Spelling should be pensioned off," the author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* recommended. "It terrifies human beings from birth."

The illustrious members of the Royal Academy, which has acted as both protector of

the Spanish language and arbiter of orthographic acceptability for the past two centuries, have reacted with scorn. "It would make Spanish like English, a language with no rules," Luis Goytisolo, the author and academy member, complained.

Senior García Márquez said he made his call before King Juan Carlos of Spain and an audience of academics gathered at the International Congress of the Spanish Language in Mexico. His ideas went down well with Latin American academics. "Spelling is used to oppress people," Raúl Ávila, the Mexican linguist, enthused.

proposals to win acceptance. Spanish greetings would never be the same; *Hola* would become *Olá*, and *bienvenido* (*Welcome*) would be either *Bienvendido* or *Bienvendido!*

Two named over Calvi death

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

MAGISTRATES in Rome yesterday issued arrest warrants for two mafiosi allegedly involved in the death of Roberto Calvi, the Vatican-linked financier known as "God's Banker", who was found hanging under Blackfriars Bridge, London, in 1982.

The warrants were served on Pippo "The Cashier" Calò and Flavio Carbone, described as a Rome businessman. Calò, a Cosa Nostra member, is already in prison for gangland crimes. Signor Carbone was

recently extradited to Italy from Switzerland on charges relating to the collapse of Banco Ambrosiano, which Calvi ran. He was not immediately arrested, but his home was searched.

Reports said the arrest warrants were the result of information given to police by Francesco Marino Mannoia, a Mafia supergrass.

The "coroner's" court in London which investigated Calvi's death was unable to decide if he had taken his own life or been murdered. During an Italian government crackdown on Cosa Nostra last

summer, Francesco "Frank the Strangler" Di Carlo, a leading Mafia gangster, reportedly confessed to killing Calvi. He who had been president of Banco Ambrosiano, which was, in effect, run by the Mafia and collapsed with huge debts in 1982.

Di Carlo was arrested in Britain in 1987 and sentenced to 25 years for drugs trafficking, but was extradited to Italy last June. Police said at the time that they believed the Mafia had wanted Calvi dead because he pocketed money invested by Mafia bosses in Banco Ambrosiano.

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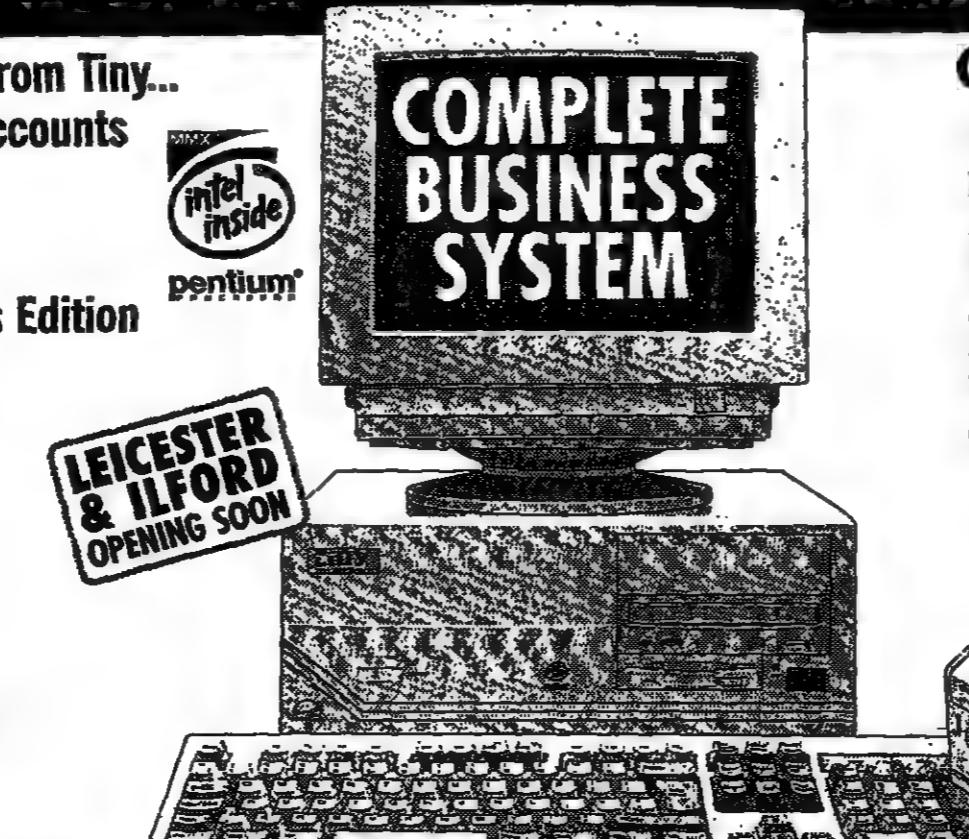
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Prime Minister of Zaire replaced amid protests as Lubumbashi falls

'Mobutu is history' says US as rebels near capital

By SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT
AND BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA called on Zaire's ailing President Mobutu to step down and leave the country yesterday as violence reached the capital, Kinshasa, and government troops failed to stop the nation's second city, Lubumbashi, from falling to rebels.

Supporters of Etienne Tshisekedi clashed with troops firing teargas in Kinshasa after the newly-appointed Prime Minister was arrested and Mr Mobutu named a successor. However, with Laurent Kabila's mainly Tutsi-led rebels 120 miles to the east of the capital, the White House publicly round-ed on its ally of the past 25

years. Mike McCurry, the White House spokesman, said: "Mobutuism is about to become a creature of history".

In Lubumbashi, troops from the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire entered the southern outskirts before taking over. They were cheered by civilians who, after 32 years of dictatorship, see the rebels as their liberators.

The guerrillas, who had met little opposition in their march across the country, encountered strong initial resistance from Mr Mobutu's presidential division, which had been reinforced overnight. By nightfall, however, it was confirmed that the rebels were in charge and only celebratory gunfire could be heard.

Yesterday the rebels also took Likasi, 60 miles north west of Lubumbashi — formerly Elizabethville — without a fight.

The town is the centre of Zaire's cobalt and copper industries and of secessionist movements since the 1960s. The rebel forces were reported to be advancing on at least three fronts, including one

from the south along the Zambian border with Zaire.

The local population, citizens of the province formerly known as Katanga, have secessionist sentiments which run deep, and do not support the government forces.

Lubumbashi, the capital of Shaba province, represents the final economic prize for the rebels. The province generates most of the Government's revenue.

Government troops

prowled the city yesterday, taking vehicles from civilians and menacing businesses. Many foreigners had already fled to Zambia in fear of army looting.

In Kinshasa, government

troops detained Mr Tshisekedi, a long-time enemy of Mr

Mobutu, after firing teargas at supporters near his car. About

2,000 protesters scattered in panic. Mr Tshisekedi was later dismissed and Mr

Mobutu appointed Likulika

Belongo as Prime Minister in his place.

Yesterday Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, said he thought face-to-face talks between Mr Mobutu and Mr Kabila might be agreed on soon — which could lead to a ceasefire. Mr Kabila has continued to insist, however, that he will not stop fighting until Mr Mobutu resigns.

Diplomats in Kinshasa fear

that the rebellion which

started in the country's east could spark a popular uprising in the capital. Hundreds of British, American, French and Belgian troops are on standby in neighbouring Congo to

evacuate foreigners.

In Washington, Mr McCurry said yesterday that support in Zaire for Mr Mobutu was "not sufficient to lead Zaire into the next chapter of its history". He said Mr McCurry was "well aware" of the American position.

Mr Mobutu, 66, who is reported to be seriously ill with prostate cancer, is believed to want to die as head of

state.

The White House wants to see a negotiated end to the civil war, including agreements on a transition government, leading eventually to democratic elections. That position, Mr McCurry said, "reflects our view that Mobutism is about to become a creature of history".

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

AFTER months in political exile Newt Gingrich, the battered Republican leader, is elbowing his way back to power in a final effort to salvage his plummeting career on Capitol Hill.

Employing invective not heard since the days of his Republican revolution in 1994, the House Speaker is assuming a high-risk strategy to reclaim his place on America's political stage.

He has glided almost unnoticed through the corridors of Congress since being found guilty in January of using a tax-free charity to help to fund his political activities. He misled investigators about the scandal and, in the first such punishment of a Speaker in American history, was fined \$300,000 (£185,000) by colleagues. He barely survived re-election to office and disappeared into obscurity.

As Congress returned from its spring recess this week, however, Mr Gingrich began a fiery counter-offensive. In speeches to political groups, he declared war on unions, compared the fundraising irregularities of the Clinton Administration to the decline of the Roman Empire, and branded Yasser Arafat, the President of the Palestinian Authority, "an active accomplice" in terror.

Yesterday he held another photo-opportunity to discuss his trip to Asia, a visit aides have deemed a public relations triumph. Tomorrow, for the first time in months, he will take part in a lengthy television interview, with Larry King. He has had lunch with freshman Republicans to convince them he is committed to tax cuts, the crown jewel of his *Contract with America*, which many felt he sacrificed at the altar of compromise with President Clinton.

Buyed by the knowledge that the Republicans lack an obvious replacement, Mr Gingrich is clearly determined to reassert his leadership. However, this Congress session is littered with potential landmines. He faces a possible criminal investigation for tax abuses and must decide whether to pay the \$300,000 with his own money or use donated funds, a move bound to anger many Republicans.

He must also handle sensitive budget negotiations and legislation on China's trading status, issues that have already divided his party. His latest public approval rating registered a mere 26 per cent — half that of Mr Clinton — and several conservative publications have called openly for a replacement.

Brazil's brutal police caught on video

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI
IN RIO DE JANEIRO

VIDEOTAPE footage of Brazilian police beating and executing civilians in slums in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro has provided visual evidence of a brutality that human rights organisations have condemned for years.

The scenes, shown on every news bulletin for the past week, have forced the authorities to take punitive measures against a force widely known to be heavy-handed and corrupt. President Cardoso, keen on "cleaning up" his country's poor human rights record, yesterday set up a

Secretariat of Human Rights to investigate atrocities. "The policemen shown in the videos will receive exemplary punishment," he said.

Six military policemen were arrested in Rio on Tuesday after Globo TV aired footage of an amateur cameraman that showed them torturing 11 people in the Cidade de Deus shantytown. Filmed at 4am on March 23, it shows men armed with automatic machineguns forcing victims against a wall and beating them with batons and belts.

The Rio tape also shows two officers, including Major Alvaro Rodrigues Garcia, who was in command, forcing two

teenage girls to strip. The video was shown a week after a tape appeared on television news showing nine São Paulo military policemen stopping cars at random in Diadema. They then robbed and beat three men, killing one.

This week Brazilian police were condemned in a report by Human Rights Watch, the American organisation, for "torturing and frequently executing civilians". It listed 30 cases of extra-judicial killings, hundreds of "disappearances" and numerous beatings — all reported in the first months of this year.

Leading article, page 21

VIOLENCE erupted for the second successive day in this West Bank city, leaving 31 Palestinians wounded and underscoring the failure of the latest American effort to revive the peace process.

'Real war' breaks out in Hebron

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN HEBRON

Battles were fought between Palestinians and Israelis as thousands of protesters vowed to take revenge after an emotional funeral for an Arab killed on Tuesday.

Slogans such as "residents of Hebron, go out and fight the settler dogs" and "there is no replacement for Hamas the Islamic Resistance Movement" were shouted as the Palestinians, armed with slingshots and firebombs, fought an unequal struggle against Israeli rubber bullets and teargas. One Israeli officer said: "It is a real war."

Kennedy's ex-wife accuses Vatican

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

JOSEPH KENNEDY, son of Robert Kennedy, the assassinated former US Attorney-General, faces disclosures about his private life in a book written by his former wife.

Mr Kennedy, 44, a Roman

Catholic, was last October granted an annulment by the Vatican of his 12-year marriage to Sheila Rauch, a Protestant. The former Mrs Kennedy is angry that the Church effectively "said that the marriage never truly existed in the first place".

Such is her "rage" that she is publishing *Shattered Faith: A Woman's Struggle to Stop the Catholic Church from Annulling her Marriage*. The book is expected to describe how the Kennedys got the Church to do their bidding.

The couple married in 1979 and divorced 12 years later. In 1993 Mr Kennedy married Beth Kelly, a former aide. As a result of the annulment, granted on the basis that Mr Kennedy did not show "due diligence" when he married, Mr Kennedy can now join fully in the life of the Church.

Kennedy: annulment enraged first wife

He must also handle sensitive budget negotiations and legislation on China's trading status, issues that have already divided his party. His latest public approval rating registered a mere 26 per cent — half that of Mr Clinton — and several conservative publications have called openly for a replacement.

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New Hong Kong leaders plan curbs on parties and protests

FROM CATHERINE FIELD IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG'S pro-democracy leaders and human rights monitors reacted with dismay yesterday after the government-in-waiting unveiled plans to rein in political parties and tighten police control over street protests.

The proposed changes to civil liberties laws will prohibit political groups from having links with or accepting advice from foreign organisations and ban party members from soliciting or accepting funds abroad. The changes will also mean that political parties will have to obtain approval from the authorities to operate and the police will have power to refuse applications for political protests.

Under the proposed laws, political parties could be banned if they are deemed to breach, among other things, "national security" and "public safety". Organisers of demonstrations of more than 30 people will have to apply seven days in advance and receive police approval.

The proposal constitutes a further deprivation of basic human rights now enjoyed in Hong Kong, Albert Ho, a Democratic Party legislator, said. Beijing's first aim, he said, was to outlaw his party and the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of the Patriotic Movement in China, a group that backs China's pro-democracy movement. The Democratic Party is the biggest political group in Hong Kong.

"The Democratic Party and

the alliance will be targeted first. But I am afraid more international groups and local groups will be targeted afterwards," Mr Ho said.

The proposals come after a high-profile fundraising trip to the United States and Canada by Democratic Party legislators. The party raised more than £184,000 during the 18-day tour.

The ban on links abroad could also be used against organisations with affiliations to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and pressure groups. Amnesty International condemned the proposals as "retrogressive".

The changes to the Societies and Public Order Ordinances come in the wake of a resolution by China's parliament, the National People's Congress (NPC), that Hong Kong's liberal civil liberties laws could not be adopted into the territory's statutes after the handover. The proposals had been sketched by Tung Chee-hwa, the Chief Executive designate, with China's backing.

An official of the incoming government issued a warning that the territory's long-running stability and prosperity made it "easy to forget that being a small and open economy, Hong Kong is extremely vulnerable to external forces". Links with Taiwan would also be banned if the law were introduced unaltered.

Emily Lau, a pro-democracy legislator, condemned proposals to force organisations to seek police approval for demonstrations and feared the laws could prevent people airing grievances on government policy. "Tung is talking about striking the right balance, but many Hong Kong people would argue that we already have the right balance."

Chris Patten, the Governor, last night challenged his post-handover successor to assert Hong Kong's right to autonomy and not bow to pressure from China. "The NPC is an important body but the NPC is not Moses bringing the tablets down from the top of the mountain," Mr Patten said.



Tung: accused of bowing to pressure from Beijing

Japanese nuclear site raided after cover-up

FROM ROBERT WHITMANT
INTOKYO

GOVERNMENT investigators yesterday raided a nuclear fuel reprocessing company after it emerged that officials had concealed the truth about Japan's worst nuclear accident.

The raid was ordered by Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, infuriated that the state-run Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation, or Donen, had instigated a cover-up for the second time in 18 months.

"I am so angry," the visibly irritated Prime Minister said. "I don't want to hear the word Donen. We will get outside consultants to conduct a full investigation."

Officials of Donen, which manages the reprocessing of nuclear fuel, have admitted that they falsified a report about a fire and explosion on March 11 at the Tokaimura nuclear complex, 100 miles northeast of Tokyo. Thirty-seven workers were exposed to radiation in the accident, which occurred in a bituminisation plant where low-level nuclear waste is mixed with asphalt for storage in drums.

The official Donen report, on March 21, said staff at the plant visually confirmed that the fire had been extinguished. Nine hours later the blaze flared up again, causing an explosion that leaked radiation into the atmosphere.

Yesterday Donen executives admitted that nobody had confirmed that the fire had been put out. "We knew it was untrue, but we thought it impossible to change the report once it was made official." Osamu Yamamura, head of the Tokaimura plant, said. "This incident filled me with shame." The Tokaimura plant has been closed indefinitely.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq breaks ban to fly pilgrims

Nicosia: Iraq violated a seven-year-old United Nations air embargo for the first time yesterday when it allowed a plane carrying 104 pilgrims to Mecca to fly to Saudi Arabia (Michael Theodoulou writes). The kingdom feels duty-bound to welcome all pilgrims, although it backed the embargo.

Poorest region

Islamabad: South Asia is the poorest and most illiterate region in the world, yet its governments use scarce resources to buy weapons instead of alleviating poverty, a UN report says. (AP)

Vietnam bomb

Hanoi: A cluster bomb left over from the Vietnam War, which ended in 1975, killed seven children and injured 34 when it exploded as they left school in the northern province of Nghe An. (AFP)

Nigeria 'lawless'

Geneva: UN rights investigators said Nigeria's rule of law was near collapse and urged the Government to halt extra-judicial killings and arbitrary arrests, and to free political prisoners. (Reuters)

Coining it in

New York: An 1804 silver dollar, one of only 15 known to exist, has sold at auction for a record \$1.8 million (£1.1 million). The coin was owned by Louis E. Eliasberg, a financier who died in 1976. (AP)

Dying for help

Beijing: A shepherd who found a protected snow leopard killing his flock left it for six days. By the time help arrived in Taxkorgan, Xinjiang province, 20 sheep had been eaten. (AFP)



Students leave their classes at Dhaka University yesterday to rejoice at Bangladesh's semi-final victory in the ICC tournament in Kuala Lumpur

One killed as cricket fans mark victory

FROM REUTER
IN DHAKA

AT LEAST one man was killed in violence set off by Bangladeshi cricket fans celebrating the national team's semi-final win over Scotland yesterday in the International Cricket Conference's tournament in Malaysia.

Police said the unidentified man was fatally stabbed after he sprayed coloured water on passers-by in the port city of Chittagong, police said. At least 170 "mad fans" were arrested in Dhaka alone.

Witnesses said that girls caught up in the celebrations had to fend off enthusiastic boys chasing them. "It's the biggest celebration since independence in 1971," said a journalist in the southern town of Khulna.

The final is on Saturday.

Match report, page 42

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Dr Thomas Stuttaford
on support for cancer patients; treatment for loose teeth that acts like rooting powder in the garden; the side-effects of an epilepsy drug; taking temperatures through the ear

Advice on cancer is just a call away

Despite improvements in the treatment of cancer of the ovary, and the partial protection against this disease provided by taking the Pill, the number of deaths from it has doubled since 1941. Fatal cases now outnumber the combined totals of cancer of the cervix (neck) and the body of the uterus combined.

The causes of cancer of the ovary are unknown, but they are more common in those whose ovulation has not been suppressed by pregnancies or the Pill. The longer a woman ovulates, the slightly greater is the risk of cancer of the ovary. The incidence is increased if periods start early or the menopause is late.

Family history of cancer of the ovary, breast or endometrium (lining of the womb) accounts for one per cent of patients who develop ovarian cancer. If a woman has two close relatives with cancer of the ovary, she has a 40 per cent chance of developing it, too. This cancer is most common between the ages of 45-70, but 50 per cent of those with a family history develop it before they are 50.

The late Dr Vicky Clement-Jones and Susan Daniel, an opera singer, are exceptions to the rule as they were among the 3 per cent of patients who have cancer of the ovary diagnosed while they are under the age of 35.

Dr Clement-Jones already had a double first from Cambridge when she went to St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, for clinical training. She was a senior registrar in the department of endocrinology at Barts, and strongly tipped for an early professorship, when cancer was diagnosed. The tumour was well established when found but, despite this, she had two trouble-free

Backup counsellors try to allay patients' fears

years. Cancer of the ovary is insidious and is usually detected only when it is large enough to cause abdominal pain and distension and after screening with ultrasound. The detection of chemical markers in the blood are being developed.

When the cancer returned, Dr Clement-Jones realised that she no longer wanted to follow the traditional academic path. The cancer had provided her with a new goal. As a patient, she had discovered that the amount of advice provided by even the most helpful doctors and nurses was inadequate to answer all the questions that cancer patients want to ask. Many worries struck patients only after they had returned home from a visit to the clinic and the anxiety would remain until their next appointment.

Dr Clement-Jones decided to start an organisation which would supplement the support provided by doctors. The organisation, Backup, was to be staffed by full-time nurses who had specialised in the treatment of cancer, and they would reply by telephone or letter to patients' queries.

The nurses had access to 200 doctors who were skilled in treating cancer and were prepared to spend time with them discussing the problems of any particular patient. The third arm of the organisation was to provide counsellors who would be prepared to give long consultations, if necessary to relieve a patient's fears. Backup, which is supported almost entirely by voluntary donations, now flourishes.

In Dr Clement-Jones's last few months of life, she met Susan Daniel, who had recovered from cancer of the ovary in 1970 only later to develop a tumour of the endometrium. Susan



Susan Daniel is so grateful for the help she received from Backup that she is performing at the organisation's charity recital

was first alerted to the ovarian cancer when she began to develop lower abdominal pain and noticed that her girth was increasing. By the time of surgery her waistband was 34 in and when the surgeon removed both ovaries, which were cancerous, he drained away 14 pints of fluid. Susan's recovery was uneventful but in 1984 she was found to have an endometrial tumour. (There is a link between cancer of the ovary and of the endometrium.)

Once again Susan has made a complete recovery and is unlikely to have any further trouble. When she met Dr Clement-Jones she promised that she would do all she could to repay

the help she had received from Backup. Christie's, the auctioneers, is supporting Backup by subsidising a charity recital in its aid, which will be given in its Great Rooms in St James's. Susan will honour her commitment to Dr Clement-Jones by singing at the recital on April 21.

Each year Backup advises more than 100,000 people who have used its freephone helpline (0800 181 999), which is open from 9.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday.

• Tickets (£50) for the Backup recital on April 21 may be obtained from Backup, 3 Bath Place, Rivington St, London EC2A 3JR (0171-696-9003).

IT can be difficult to take the temperature of a young child, the very old or those who are delirious, comatose or unconscious. In these groups an accurate reading can be made only by inserting the thermometer into the rectum; underarm temperatures are unreliable, and suggesting that a child, or a demented adult, might put a thermometer under the tongue causes obvious problems.

But however useful rectal temperature taking is, it does

Lend me your ear...

raise the question as to whether *E. coli* 157 bacteria, or anything else which might contaminate the instrument, are really killed by dipping it into methylated spirits.

Braun has now produced a battery operated instant electrical thermometer, the Thermo Scan, for household use.

The Thermo Scan fits snugly into the outer part of the ear hole. The middle ear shares its blood vessels with the hypothalamus, the temperature control centre of the brain, and this makes the recording particularly accurate.

The ear hole has the advantage of being rather cleaner than the other orifices used, it is dry, and by using it the risk of bowel perforation, which has happened in tracheal patients, is avoided.

More help is on the way for migraine sufferers

THE competition between pharmaceutical firms to treat the six million British people who have migraine is heating up.

Recently a nasal spray preparation of Imitram, which acts more quickly than tablets, has been introduced by Glaxo. This week Zeneca, previously ICI, has launched Zomig zolmitriptan tablets.

Zeneca claims that Zomig is effective if taken at any time during a migraine attack and that as well as relieving headache it usually relieves the patients of other symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting and visual disturbances.

As with Imitram, it can cause tightness in the chest and throat, but there is no evidence that this is cardiac pain. Even so, it is not



Pain like this can be treated

recommended for those with coronary heart disease, or in patients with some forms of arrhythmia.

It is rumoured that before the end of the year there will be two or three other anti-migraine products available on prescription by their doctors for patients.

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The root of the problem

A new dental treatment is being introduced from Sweden which promises to perform the same function for dentists treating teeth loosened by old age or gum disease as rooting powder does for the gardener when he dips the end of a cutting into it before planting. Endogain, a protein which stimulates the same process which binds the teeth of babies to the jaw.

The shape of the lower jaw is changing. The strong firm lines of the hero in a Bulldog Drummond film are less common in this generation than in the last and progressively, as the years pass, jaws are now being developed which would better suit characters from P.G. Wodehouse. It is to be expected that being a chinless wonder limits sex appeal, but less obviously it also has an effect on the health of the teeth and gums.

Although jaws are becoming lighter and more delicate the teeth seem as strong and large, possibly even larger, than previously. The mouth is therefore overcrowded and one of the casualties of this are the wisdom teeth.

The high incidence of impacted wisdom teeth in the present generation which need treatment is, according to research work from the celebrated Karolinska Institute at the University of Stockholm, part of the evidence that the strength of the jaw is changing. The impaction of the wisdom teeth is probably the start of a persistently infected gum in late adolescence and early adult life.

However powerful the jaw is in youth, in old age it suffers from osteoporosis just as much as other bones, and as it



Babies use Endogain for binding

does so, the jawbone shrinks away from the teeth. As the jawbone shrinks gaps appear around the teeth and into these pockets epithelium grows, food collects and a chronic infective state is induced. The bleeding soggy gums increase the looseness of the tooth which in time may fall out, thereby confirming Shakespeare's description in *As You Like It* of old age as being sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste and sans everything.

Dentists have traditionally seen the infected gum with pockets forming around the tooth as the primary cause of loose teeth and have recommended a variety of remedial measures. Many doctors on the other hand think of the diseased gum as a secondary symptom of underlying bone loss, or malformation, and regard it as the fundamental

cause of the infection, and hence the insecure teeth.

Endogain the protein which stimulates tooth detachment, has been prepared from animal, but not bovine, sources. The application of Endogain to the root results in regeneration of all the tissues around the tooth root. The acellular cementum, the covering of the tooth root is given new life and collagen fibres therefrom extend from it into the newly regenerated bone around the tooth socket. The process once again makes tooth fast within the jawbone.

Endogain is easy to use. After it has been decided the case is suitable, a flap of gum is raised, the area around the tooth and the root gently cleaned and the gel applied to the clean blood and saliva root surface. The wound heals remarkably quickly. Patients notice the improvement with their teeth within a month, within six months this improvement can be demonstrated on x-rays and within 16 months, two-thirds of the looseness has been redressed. Within three years 70 per cent of the lost attachment has been regained.

Not all gum diseases has its origins in osteoporosis, or overcrowded wisdom teeth in feeble jaws. A lack of dental hygiene in youth, whether its inadequate cleaning or failure to have fillings done on time by the dentist, accounts for a significant proportion of cases.

Some drugs will also cause gum hyperplasia which makes them soggy. One new hypotensive drug, a calcium-channel blocker used to treat high blood pressure, also induces soft spongy receding gums, which are vulnerable to infection.

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Morals are made in the classroom

George Carey says the debate about values must now move on

Trust has suddenly become a significant electoral word — and properly so. Behind it stands a vocabulary of moral terms that enrich the notion of trust: honesty, goodness, reliability, faithfulness and honour. This is a vocabulary to be claimed not only by politicians but by all of us. As the Chief Rabbi has put it, you cannot express yourself as a moral and spiritual person if you do not have a spiritual or moral language.

Yet our society has become morally reticent, even inarticulate. The main culprit is the popular cultural assumption that to try to define something as good and right in an absolute sense is an unwarranted and potentially oppressive incursion into a domain which should be purely private. According to this view, what is right is simply a matter of individual opinion.

Yet most of us recognise that no society can survive for long unless it is held together by standards that transcend the individual. Values and morals are social, not merely individual. They need careful nurture and a continuous process of modelling, discussion and internalisation across the generations. And, without such as trust, honesty, justice and peace, there can be no individual liberty, because there can be no orderly society within which individuals can grow and express themselves in interdependence with others. If the citizens of a country do not internalise the responsibility to behave fairly and peacefully towards other people, there is no external power on earth that can secure peace and justice. And in my experience, the vast majority of people, even if they articulate the cultural assumption that morality is a purely private affair, actually have strong beliefs about some things that are absolutely good and others that are absolutely evil.

Here, let me make an important distinction. As a society we do not agree on one single source of authority which legitimises the values we hold in common. But this is a fundamentally different proposition from saying that we have no shared values any more.

We have seen recently in the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority's report, and the ensuing discussion, that it is possible and normal to have different views of authority and of particular ethical questions and yet to have strong shared values which we can build on together for the good of all.

I understand that from the large and heterogeneous group responding to the authority's report, and much to the surprise of some of those attending a substantial consensus emerged about a whole series of values. I do not agree that these values are bland or uninteresting, although they need illustration, dramatisation and human modelling to bring them to life. The values relate to the healthy functioning of society, our relationships with other people, our

The time has come to stop arguing about words

raising children and caring for dependents; we should support the institution of marriage; and we should recognise that the love and commitment required for a secure and happy childhood can be found in families of different kinds.

I and many others would not doubt want to make additional and stronger points if we were setting out our own full beliefs, but I have no difficulty in accepting the statement of the forum as a consensus that exists now.

The specific mention of support for the institution of marriage can be translated into a great deal of new thinking and classroom work about marriage: why it is important, what it needs in order to flourish and what people entering marriage need to think about. I believe that the time has come to stop arguing about particular words in the statement and to move on to the vital task of considering what the implications of the words are for the curriculum, activities and ethos of schools.

I want to emphasise that the development of such a considerable consensus on shared values is a major step forward in empowering schools. We need these values to be transmitted confidently and positively. In a society disfigured by widespread moral confusion and false theories of privatised morality, that is a most significant prize.

The Archbishop of Canterbury will speak on values and the curriculum at the London Institute of Education today.

Crossroads

LORD MENUHIN and the Duke of Westminster have notched up a momentous victory against traffic planners in London's Belgravia. They have persuaded Westminster Council to reconsider a plan to drive an arterial road through their back-gardens.

The two peers have for many months been leading a campaign on behalf of the best-heeled "Nimby" pressure group in the land, with members ranging from Lord Lloyd-Webber to Baroness Thatcher and Tony Rowland.

Though hardly a bunch of Swampy-style subversives, they were moved to protest when the council endorsed a plan to turn a road running through those grand addresses Chester Square and Eaton Square into a "red route" — one of the main roads for traffic into and out of London.

On Tuesday night, however, the council capitulated and agreed to spend £50,000 investigating an alternative possibility, re-routing the traffic away from the stuccoed residences of the well-to-do, some of which have sold for more than £10 million.

The Belgravia Resident's Association is cracking open its vintage

bubbly. "For the first time we have got a commitment out of Westminster Council," says Jonathan Scott-Barrett of the association. "Yehudi Menuhin has been passionate about the campaign. Everybody here will have a better quality of life."

• Clare Short was sympathetic when she visited the East Leeds Women's Workshops yesterday. The workshops had all their com-

puter stolen recently, replaced them, and then had them stolen again. Short knew how they felt. Last weekend she returned to her place in London to find her TV and video had been pinched.



DIARY

Capital

HAIRY coats and cigarette-holders will be on parade at the weekend for the first visit to London of Aleksandr Lebed, Russia's exotic former security chief. On Friday evening he will turn to the bosom of capitalism and attend a private dinner hosted by Robert Fleming's bank. On Saturday, he attends an economic conference at the Dorchester, where he will be introduced by the world chess champion Garry Kasparov. And he is also expected to show up at a meeting of the European Bank for Re-

construction and Development. Over at the Russian Embassy, the lugubrious press officer, Boris Malakhov, sounds unimpressed: "I'm sure he'll pop in, but it's nothing to do with us." Perhaps he should head up towards Trafalgar and stand as an independent Bolshevik candidate.

• As stunts go, this could prove a chilly one: 25 women are planning to walk the Flora London Marathon wearing nothing but a Wonderbra above the waist. The bras have been custom-made to designs



Lebed: hairy

by well-known names such as Gary Lineker, the Spice Girls and Lenny Lewis. Richard Branson's contribution to the gimmick to raise funds for Breakthrough Breast Cancer, ranks as the most childish: a large hot air balloon attached to each cap.

Tall story

THERE is a nasty air in Hammersmith, where Tories have been putting it around that the Labour candidate, Ian Colman, is a sex industry heir. He is being described as a real Paul Raymond. "There is absolutely no truth in this whatsoever," says a flushed Colman. But did his father not make a fortune from the Ann Summers sex toy business? "He worked for them for a while ten or fifteen years ago, that's all. This whole story is a cheap smear."

Girl talk

MARLENE DIETRICH'S family are upset by the musical about the singer which opened at the Lyric Theatre in London on Tuesday night. In *Marlene*, Sian Phillips puts in an impressive turn as the dew-eyed chanteuse, while Lou Gieh plays her female sidekick, Vivian Hoffman. In portraying



Marlene ripped off

this relationship, the show implies that Dietrich was more gander than goose behind closed doors.

Peter Riva, Dietrich's grandson, is disappointed. "They have to make something salacious to sell the tickets," he says from New York. He adds that the show is yet another commercial venture which "rips off my grandmother's original material. We get a little hacked off with it in the end."

P-H-S



Mr W.S.'s election lie guide
Magnus Linklater
on how to catch the scurvy politicians

Here is a checklist for anyone still following the daily jousts between candidates and the media, as the politicians twist and turn to conceal their weaknesses and to vilify their opponents. Touchstone would instantly recognise the type. In *As You Like It*, he ticked them off to perfection: "I will name the degrees. The first, the Retort Courteous; the second, the Quip Modest; the third, the Reply Churlish; the fourth, the Reproof Valiant; the fifth, the Countercheck Quarrelsome; the sixth, the Lie with Circumstance; the seventh, the Lie Direct. All these you may avoid, but the Lie Direct; and you may avoid that too, with an if."

They have all been on display. The Retort Courteous is the one given by the politician caught by a tricky question which attempts to pin him down on the cost of some measure. It involves referring the questioner to a previous answer, preferably buried in a document published some time ago and which may not quite address the point raised. By the time the document is located and the matter looked up, the moment will have passed. "We've got an independent consultant's report on that," said a Scottish Nationalist yesterday. "It was published 18 months ago and we're happy to distribute it to you." Whether it addressed the matter or not was never pursued. Even if it had been, I wonder whether we would have been any the wiser.

The Quip Modest is that tell-tale chuckle and the shake of the head which says, "Oh no, not that old chestnut, don't tell me you've been taken in by it again, when will you press chappies ever learn?" It is usually enough to get everyone else on the platform joining in disbeliefing laughter as they search desperately for the answer. Michael Heseltine is the best practitioner, because that baffled shake of the tawny locks as he considers the naivety of the question conceals the fact that what comes out in reply is more often political invective than a direct response.

The Reply Churlish turns a perfectly reasonable point back against the questioner, implying that some deviant political motive renders the issue irrelevant. Robin Cook was up to it yesterday on Radio 4's phone-in when he twice rebuked a listener for asking whether new Labour might have a hidden left-wing programme. That, he pointed out, was a typically loaded question bearing all the hallmarks of a Tory plant. He never got round to addressing the point itself, but simply left the impression that those who had raised it were mere paid propagandists. I doubt if he won many votes, but he certainly avoided the question.

The Reproof Valiant indicates that the question posed reveals woeful ignorance. Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, who has a nice line in lopsided grins and teasing innuendo, used it on Tuesday when he was asked whether his proposal to increase the rates burden for large firms in order to reduce the bill for small businesses did not amount to a socialist measure. "It's very difficult to know what a socialist measure is these days," he sighed. This, however, was certainly not one. Since we had plainly failed to grasp the point, he spelt it out. The scheme was a "self-financing" measure which would not cost the taxpayer any more. So there was no question of redistributing wealth, since public funds were not involved. His audience, exposed as economically illiterate, was left to flounder as he moved briskly on.

Next, the Countercheck Quarrelsome. This is usually to be seen at Labour's press conference when some hostile newspaper, usually *The Daily Telegraph*, comes up with an inconvenient question. "Ah, the brief from Central Office," Peter Mandelson will say, as he deflects the point. Or he will, even more insultingly, to "Mr Robert Stogey" when that paper's political editor, Robert Shrimley, has the temerity to raise his hand. This kind of pre-emptive move raises a doubt about the objectivity of the journalist and wins a laugh at the same time. And laughter is the most useful weapon in the hands of an experienced obfuscator.

The Lie with Circumstance and the Lie Direct are the most dangerous of the lot, if only because they can be, and sometimes are, exposed. They are to be used sparingly. The former can generally be spotted when the tell-tale phrase "if resources allow" is tacked on to an election promise. When asked whether this is not a way of dodging a commitment, the politician turns to his standard reply: "But you would not expect us to be so irresponsible as to promise something unless we were certain we could pay for it." Thus the promise remains, though it need not necessarily be fulfilled. The Lie Direct, of course, is used by every single politician who promises to hold taxes down and knows perfectly well that he will not. But he knows too that he is protected, by Touchstone's "if," which means — if elected, if things change, if forced by circumstance.

"I durst go no further than the Lie Circumstantial, nor he durst not give me the Lie Direct," says Touchstone; "and so we measured swords and parted."



ENDANGERED SPECIES

Harrogate, Rochdale and a stronger Parliament

Separated by rather more than the Pennines, the constituencies of Harrogate and Rochdale would not seem to share much in common. The former is a grand and genteel Victorian spa venue more akin to Bath or Cheltenham than neighbouring Leeds and Bradford. The latter is a tough former textile town that came of age in the Industrial Revolution. But both have it within their power to endorse or dismiss two different and distinctive voices in British politics.

Over the remaining weeks *The Times* will seek to identify certain individual candidates who can make an unusual contribution to the next House of Commons. On the whole they will be dissident figures within their respective parties. While we may not necessarily agree with the views they propagate we do believe that what they stand for is important. Their election would benefit both constituency and country.

Norman Lamont and Liz Lynne are as different as the territory they are fighting. Mr Lamont has already been an MP for a quarter-century and held high office. Ms Lynne won her seat for the Liberal Democrats at the last election and is unlikely ever to serve as a frontbencher. Mr Lamont, whose Kingston seat was abolished by the boundary commissioners, faces a vigorous Liberal Democrat challenge. Ms Lynne, also a southerner, has the Labour Party breathing down her neck.

The most fundamental issue confronting the next Parliament is Europe. Its most obvious aspect is the introduction or not of a single currency. That is only part of a complicated picture. The whole character of the European Union, and Britain's relationship with it, will be determined by decisions made in the next five years. Mr Lamont was the first senior politician to suggest that present arrangements might be unsustainable. He has, braving criticism from above, been the most intelligent and articulate figure suggesting that fundamental renegotiation or outright withdrawal are options worthy of consideration.

Even if the Government is re-elected,

events will ensure that this view becomes part of the mainstream agenda. If the Tories go into opposition it could well become an orthodoxy. It can be put either in a rational and considered fashion or as a narrow-minded nationalism. Mr Lamont's continued presence in the Commons would help steer the Conservative debate in the right direction. The people of Yorkshire have always been of independent character and have consistently fought to maintain the special character of their county. That same spirit should lead their sympathies and support towards the former Chancellor.

Liz Lynne is also an unusual politician. A former actress and speech consultant she was given little chance of retaining a seat that Cyril Smith had previously held by force of personal character. To universal surprise she proved blessed with the tenacious qualities of her predecessor. A non-conformist in every sense she fought a ceaseless campaign against socialism. She represents an earthy, almost extinct, urban Liberalism more concerned with bread-and-butter issues than constitutional innovation.

Ms Lynne has been a thorough nuisance to Paddy Ashdown. She declines to buckle to the comfortable consensus that now exists between Labour and the Liberal Democrats. She has constantly frustrated closer cooperation between them. If the likes of Lord Jenkins had their way, the Liberals would represent little more than the public sector middle class and proportional representation. That would not reflect much credit on the purported party of pluralism. Ms Lynne personifies a robust dissent that should be welcome at Westminster.

Parliament would benefit from the triumph of this odd couple. Their defeat would impoverish the quality of debate and strengthen the already excessive power of party managers. If present polls are right both of these candidates could prove electorally endangered species. The residents of Harrogate and Rochdale would serve the rest of us well if they extended them some protection.

Negotiations on the TV debate

From Mr Michael Dobbs

Sir, last night's *Panorama* broadcast, Mr Blair said of the negotiations for a television debate that "what happened in those negotiations were (sic) that at the moment it looked as if the negotiations were about to succeed, then the (the Conservatives) pulled out."

It was the Labour Party alone which pulled out of negotiations. The *Guardian* headline of March 28 said: "Labour halts TV debate". *The Sun* on the same day said: "Labour call off debate". Austin Mitchell, one of Mr Blair's own MPs, described him in *The Sunday Times* of March 30 as emerging in "a quick crawl backwards".

The events of the afternoon of Labour's withdrawal are instructive, and cut through Mr Blair's mischievous and inaccurate nonsense.

On March 27 ITV sent all three parties a fax which stated that it was confident that its proposal "represents the basis for a very successful and compelling series of two 90-minute programmes". It offered further elaboration on its proposal, emphasising that these were "suggestions which we believe could bring the negotiations to a speedier conclusion". Yet within four hours of receiving ITV's written proposal, Labour had walked away from the table.

No one in the Labour Party has yet been able to explain clearly why Labour suggests there is a problem over audience participation — but ITV's proposal includes audience participation. Labour also suggests that the proposals might be challenged in court — but the broadcasters submitted their proposals only after they had received clear legal opinion that they would withstand a challenge in court.

The broadcasters, who are politically neutral, believe their proposals to be both lawful and fair. Why doesn't Mr Blair?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL DOBBS,
Conservative Central Office,
32 Smith Square, SW1.
April 8.

'Best deal' for Britain

From the Shadow Foreign Secretary

Sir, It is a shame that the Foreign Office Minister, David Davis, used this week's Council of Ministers meeting in Noordwijk, The Netherlands, to indulge in cheap electioneering instead of arguing the case for Britain's EU chief plan to embrace Labour at Maastricht". report, April 8.

Anyone who thinks that Tony Blair is going to sell Britain out in Europe hasn't been paying attention for the last three years. He will go about the task of getting the best deal for Britain with the same determination he has shown in transforming the Labour Party.

We have made it clear that we regard the idea of an extra European summit in Maastricht in May as premature and would reject any attempts to force the pace of discussions. We will, of course, endeavour to reach agreement at the Amsterdam summit in June, but we will not sign up to any deal until we are satisfied that it reflects Britain's national interests.

Yours sincerely,
ROBIN COOK,
John Smith House,
150 Walworth Road, SE17.
April 8.

Medical consent

From the Editor of the
Bulletin of Medical Ethics

Sir, Lord Ashbourne and Mr Gerard Wright (letter, April 1) are right to complain at the lack of discussion of the Council of Europe's Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine.

This was in part because circulation of early drafts was restricted by the British chairman of the drafting committee. They are wrong, however, to say that our law does not permit medical procedures, not designed to be of direct benefit to the recipient, to be performed on those unable to consent to them.

The Nuremberg Code — of principles for the ethical conduct of research on human subjects — was part of the judgment delivered 50 years ago at the trial of Nazi doctors engaged in horrific experiments. Its opening statement — "The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential" — has never been subsumed into English law.

Instead a series of guidelines have been promulgated by bodies such as the Royal College of Physicians and the Medical Research Council, advising that medical research procedures of no benefit to a subject who cannot consent to them may be performed, provided they are of no more than minimal risk.

These guidelines have never been challenged in court. The most relevant case law is a decision of the House of Lords permitting blood to be taken from children in cases of disputed paternity, even though this invasive procedure is of no direct benefit to them.

On this issue, therefore, the new European convention does no more than reflect current UK practice.

Yours sincerely,
R. H. NICHOLSON,
Editor,
Bulletin of Medical Ethics,
31 Corsica Street, N5.
April 2

Sir, When I was on the staff of Bristol Grammar School in the late 1950s (letter, April 7) a sixth former said to me after a visitor had left the room: "I knew he couldn't be a teacher. His shoes were polished."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Martin Bell's candidature and Neil Hamilton's honour

From Mr Charles Pinder

Sir, Neil Hamilton is entitled to defend his honour and has a right to a presumption of innocence. However, he also stands as a candidate for a political party which needs more than ever to advocate its cause with vigour and clarity, and his difficulties are preventing the Conservatives from meeting that pressing need.

He should recognise that the electoral prospects of his party, and thus the prospects for the nation as a whole, are of much more importance than his own defence of his reputation.

He should withdraw his candidature, expose the diversionary manipulation of the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties and allow his party to fight on the real issues. He can clear his name after the election.

This would be a win for Mr Hamilton and a win for the Conservatives.

Yours faithfully,
C. M. PINDER,
The Corner, Easton,
Winchester, Hampshire.
April 9.

From the Reverend Ian Gaskell

Sir, Matthew Parris is right to say (April 8) that if St Francis of Assisi were to stand for Tatton, he would

find himself under press suspicion within days".

Francis's life prior to his conversion was one of debauchery and revelling and, without doubt, would have proved very fertile territory for the scandalous appetites of today's press. I am confident that the electorate of Tatton will find that neither Neil Hamilton nor Martin Bell has a record to compare with that of the young Francis.

Yours sincerely,
IAN GASKELL,
Saint Paul's Vicarage,
6 Vicarage Gardens, Birkenshaw,
Bradford, West Yorkshire.
April 8.

From Mr Jonathan Berman

Sir, A journalist as an anti-sleaze candidate? Neil Hamilton has achieved the impossible.

Yours faithfully,
JON BERMAN,
Ryeworth House, 61 Kidmore Road,
Caversham, Berkshire.
April 7.

From Mr Beverley Morgan

Sir, The brief confrontation between the Hamiltons and Martin Bell, as shown on television last evening, prompts me strongly to regret that

Martin, whom we all admire, has given up his day job.

I am, yours faithfully,
BEVERLEY MORGAN,
9 Winterstoke Gardens,
Mill Hill, NW7.
April 9.

From Mr J. Anthony C. Martin

Sir, I have long regretted the absence (since the abolition of the university seats) of independent Members of Parliament. With the candidature of Martin Bell, there is hope we may get one again. May the electors of Tatton return him, with a splendid majority.

Yours faithfully,
J. A. C. MARTIN,
Flat 15,
Royal Victoria Patriotic Building,
Fitzhugh Grove, SW18.
April 9.

From Mr Dominic Afrillat

Sir, I applaud Martin Bell's professed abhorrence of sleaze, but through his experience as a war correspondent did he not acquire a similar distaste for mob justice?

Yours sincerely,
DOMINIC AFRILLAT,
3a Westland Close, Slough, Berkshire.
April 9.

Local television

From the Chairman of
Digital Television Network

Sir, I cannot agree with Brenda Maddox that, with the launch of a nationally focused Channel 5, cable is now the "only hope" for local television ("The TV channel with a difference — predictability", Media and Marketing, April 3). Digital terrestrial television should also provide an opportunity to create a network of city-based local television stations.

If we are awarded the digital television licences by the ITC next month, then we will pilot such a local television service for Manchester. Having once established a workable model we then envisage rolling the concept out to cover Glasgow, Birmingham, Nottinghamshire, Leeds/Bradford and many other cities and conurbations.

Local television is one of the key gaps in the British television mix. Such services, if well done, have the potential to enrich local communities, boost voluntary effort and make local government accessible and accountable.

ITV provides a good regional perspective, but there is room for services which are more locally focused and relevant. They can be made viable through a mixture of traditional advertising supported by interactive services and local, television-based, classified advertising.

We look to the ITC to make a decision which will realise the full potential of the new digital age through which local television should find its place in the sun.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES GATWARD,
Chairman,
Digital Television Network,
22 Suffolk Street, SW1.
April 3.

Spelling it out

From Eur Ing H. Bibring

Sir, Why are verbal references to dates in the next century almost invariably given as (eg) "Two thousand and fourteent" or "Two thousand and twenty seven" as opposed to "Twenty fourteen" or "Twenty twenty seven", as in all other centuries? Nobody speaks of "One thousand and sixty six and all that", do they?

Is the explanation simply that nowadays we never use two words when four will do?

Yours sincerely,
H. BIBRING,
8 Carrat's Road,
Bushey Heath, Hertfordshire.
April 4.

Childhood literature

From Mrs Pam Robinson

Sir, To continue what could be a saga of the influences of literature on our childhood and beyond (letter, March 28), I cannot let a birthday or Christmas cake without being reminded of a sentence from *Little Grey Rabbit's Party* by Alison Uttley: "In the middle was the party cake, covered with icing which Hare had brought from the top of the pond."

Even at 51 this poignant reminder of a "simpler" time still brings a tear to my eye.

Yours sincerely,

P. ROBINSON,
48 St John's Way,
Sandbach, Cheshire.

Palais glider?

From Miss Susan Pease

Sir, I was intrigued to read in your report today (later editions) of Elton John's 50th birthday party at the Hammersmith Palais last night, that he was wearing a "2ft tall powdered wig". You failed to say how it was powdered and what it did.

Yours faithfully,
SUSAN PEASE,
130 Goldhurst Terrace, NW6.
April 7.

But me no ands

From His Honour Alan King-Hamilton, QC

Sir, Derwent May's entertaining article, "The power and the glory of conjunctives" (April 5), reminded me of a preliminary point of law which I had to decide at the outset of a prosecution under a new statute which had been passed pursuant to an international treaty.

The point was whether "or" in a section of the statute was disjunctive or conjunctive. I decided that, in its context, it was conjunctive, as also did the Court of Appeal and the House of Lords.

Thus it took nine judges to decide that a two-letter word should be read as a three-letter word.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN KING-HAMTON,
Royal Air Force Club,
128 Piccadilly, W1.
April 6.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

OBITUARIES

Thomas Atkinson, GC, died in Dorset on March 26 aged 81. He was born at Redcar on May 27, 1915.

In an act of bravery — and, as so often in such cases, of resourcefulness — which involved his being severely burnt, Thomas Atkinson was instrumental in controlling a serious fire which threatened loss of life and large scale destruction of Army transport on a remote mountain base in prewar Palestine. For this he was awarded the Empire Gallantry Medal, which was gazetted on July 25, 1939, and translated to the George Cross in 1941.

At that time Atkinson was serving as a corporal with the 1st battalion, The Green Howards, in a Palestine which was then governed under a League of Nations Mandate by Great Britain. He was stationed at Jinsafut Camp, an isolated outpost high in the harsh, rocky terrain of the Samaritan Hills. Early in 1939 he had been put in charge of the camp's mechanised transport. In the evening of March 15, 1939, he was supervising the refuelling of eight lorries which were packed together in the close

confines of the camp's only garage, a small, narrow affair in which the lorries had to be packed far more closely together than was desirable.

The operation was made the more hazardous through the inefficient design of the Army two-gallon petrol tin, which was then standard equipment before the merciful arrival of the far superior Jerry can (which was copied from a German design) during the North African campaign two years later. However carefully the two-gallon can was poured, some spillage was inevitable, and in hot, and climates, not to mention the proximity of hot exhaust pipes, this was highly dangerous.

Whether or not what happened next was a result of spontaneous combustion, or whether a disaffected Arab threw a flare into the building through the ventilation slit, was never established; but without warning a fire broke out in the middle of the garage and quickly engulfed one of the lorries. With the amount of fuel on the floor and the proximity of both the base ammunition dump and a barrack housing 60 men, the potential for catastrophe was clearly enormous.

Atkinson's first action was to

THOMAS ATKINSON, GC

order all the drivers to get their lorries out of the garage and drive them as far from the barrack and ammunition dump as possible. While this was happening the remaining troops tackled the blaze with fire extinguishers. But these could not cope with the ferocity of the flames and only five of the lorries had been got out of the garage by the time the fire had spread over the whole floor.

Atkinson ordered his men to dig up soil to throw on the flames, but in trying to do one young soldier slipped and fell onto the burning fuel. With complete disregard for his inferno, Atkinson dived into the inferno to try to pull the man out. But at that point a petrol tank blew up and Atkinson was flung several yards through the air by the blast. Momentarily consciousness, he came to, to find that he was burning from head to foot and could hardly see.

At this point, Private Thomas McAvoy, who was working closely with Atkinson, punched a hole in the petrol tank of one of the other lorries to prevent it from exploding, sustaining burns as he did so. He, too, was awarded the Empire Gallantry Medal for his courage

and quick thinking on that day. The citation in Atkinson's decoration acknowledged the fact that without his initiative which had brought the bulk of the trucks to safety and his intelligent efforts to keep the blaze under control, the whole camp would most probably have been destroyed by fire and explosions, with heavy loss of life.

Thomas Atkinson was born at Redcar, northeast Yorkshire, into a family which had long associations with the sea as fishermen and as crew of the celebrated Redcar lifeboat. He was educated at school locally and then had a number of bits and pieces jobs in the Depression years — particularly severe in that depressed area of the country.

But the Army offered an escape from this existence and in November 1933 he made his way to Richmond (Yorkshire) to enlist in the Green Howards, which has its headquarters in the town. During a period while his battalion was posted to Dorset he met and married a local girl, Doreen Bowen.

After the incident at Jinsafut, Atkinson was invalided back to Britain and spent much time thereafter in hospital receiving

treatment for his severe burns. These effectively ended his service career and before the end of the war he was invalided out of the Army and returned to live in the Portland area. There he worked as an Admiralty driver, a job which took him out to Singapore for a number of years in the 1950s. Subsequently he was employed as a stone sawyer in the Portland stone industry.

In retirement at Weston, Portland, after 1965, he maintained contact with his regiment and was also a great supporter of the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association. A quiet and unassuming man, he enjoyed a game of billiards or snooker at his local Conservative Club (though that choice of venue had nothing to do with his political affiliations). A bench dedicated to him at Portland last year recalls his deed in the South of England, while in his native northeast a plaque outside the Redcar and Cleveland council chamber in Eston town hall celebrates him and two other sons of the district who received the highest awards for valour.

Atkinson's wife Doreen died last year and he is survived by their two sons and a daughter.



DAME GUINEVERE TILNEY



Dame Guinevere Tilney, DBE, personal adviser to Margaret Thatcher, 1975-84, died on April 4 aged 80. She was born on September 8, 1916.

GUINEVERE TILNEY was a woman who filled several roles well. She was at different times an astute secretary, a dedicated political wife and a committed campaigner for women's rights. But she was best known, perhaps, for her role as personal adviser to Margaret Thatcher after she had become Conservative leader and, later, when she was Prime Minister.

Travelling abroad with Margaret Thatcher, Tilney had an ability to anticipate needs well in advance and to sort out problems when they occurred. This made her an invaluable companion. She did not always find it easy to be wardrobe mistress to a woman who travelled so much and needed clothes to suit all climates, let alone to a woman who had such firm ideas of her own. But Tilney's dedication could, and did, exceed the call of duty. When it was necessary for the Prime Minister to slim before a physically demanding official visit to China, Tilney went on the same diet by way of encouragement.

Tilney, however, had played a not inconsiderable political role in her own right. In 1970 Lord Home, then Foreign Secretary in Edward Heath's administration, sent her to America as the British representative on the UN Commission on the Status of Women. She proved a popular choice. She could be relied on to make a well informed speech, and

had none of the offputting characteristics of the militant feminist. In New York she campaigned with vigour for the rights of women in the Third World.

Tall, slim and good looking, Tilney had a sense of style that stood out. She wore superbly cut suits in beautiful but plain fabrics by day, and in the evening long dresses which always stopped short of flamboyance but had a swinging glamour.

Guinevere Tilney was of Scottish descent. Her maiden name was Grant, and she was the younger daughter of the 12th baronet, Sir Hamilton Grant, and his wife, Margaret Cochran. Sir Hamilton Grant

was Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, 1914-1919, and later, for several years head of the civil administration in the North West Province of India, now Pakistan. Guinevere's grandfather was Professor of Law at Edinburgh University for some 30 years.

Guinevere was sketchily educated at Westonbirt — "we concentrated mainly on porties," she said — and went on to the outbreak of the Second World War, to join the WRNS.

She reached the rank of second officer. Her maternal grandfather was a regular officer in the Royal Navy. It was during the war that she met and married Captain

Lionel Hunter of the Canadian Dragoon Guards. He died in 1947, the year that her only child was born. Her father had already died when she was 18 and her mother moved in to a grace and favour residence in Hampton Court Palace.

A widow at 31, she took a course in typing, shorthand and book-keeping and a year later took the job which was to set the course for the rest of her life. She became a secretary to Lord Selborne, an elderly man of vast experience in politics, the city and business. At the time he was chairman of the National Provincial Bank and very involved in the Conservative Commonwealth Council. He had been Minister for Economic Warfare, 1942-45, and had sat as an MP for various constituencies for some 40 years.

It was through her work with him and her interest in the Commonwealth that she met her second husband John Tilney. He had become chairman of the West African Committee of the Conservative Commonwealth Council of which she was a member. A man of good war record, he had joined the family stockbroking firm in Liverpool and became MP for Liverpool (Wavertree) in the city, becoming its first chairman. With its sharp political focus, it was a resounding success.

She used these and other luncheon clubs to raise money for Commonwealth causes and for furthering the status of women in the Third World.

Sales of used clothing were a great success. Women lunch guests who asked Guinevere Tilney what they should bring would be somewhat taken aback when she said: "your nearly-new, your nearly-new."

It was probably she who gave the name to what has now become common place in London and smarter country villages — the "nearly-new" sale.

Tilney was appointed DBE in 1984. She was deputy-lieutenant for Lancaster, 1974-76, and of Merseyside, 1974-76. She was president of the National Council of Women of Great Britain, 1961-68.

Her second husband died in 1994. She nursed him devotedly throughout his long final illness.

She is survived by her son.

junior ministerial posts. Tilney was one of the first of what today are called "ladies who lunch". But her lunches had serious purpose. In the early 1950s she was chairman of the Empire Ladies Lunch Club. It consisted mostly of wives of peers and MPs who were interested in the emerging Commonwealth and in women's rights. Her husband was the chairman of the Liverpool Luncheon Club, and when she discovered that women were only allowed on special occasions she set up the Merseyside Conservative Women's Luncheon Club in the city, becoming its first chairman. With its sharp political focus, it was a resounding success.

He also helped to frame the legislation, prompted by his enthusiastic minister, Barbara Castle, which restored the present network of canals and connecting rivers — designating some for recreational purposes, others for commerce.

He had started in civil aviation, moving on to motorway planning and was present at the opening of the M1. The environmental value of motorway verges was among the areas in which he specialised.

Yet the man who signed "Irwin's by-laws" was not originally called Irwin at all. He was born Arthur Hugh Montgomery Miller in Ealing, west London. Hugh's father later changed his name to Irwin in order to inherit a large family estate on the shores of Lough Erne in Co Fermanagh.

Irwin was educated at Clifton College and Clare College, Cambridge, where he read French and German.

After graduating in the early 1930s, he entered the Home Affairs department of the then Northern Ireland Government in Stormont, working there until the start of the Second World War.

In 1942 he transferred to the Admiralty. He was then posted to the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 1947 and in 1952 won a Nuffield travelling fellowship to Australia — compiling a year-long study for Whitehall on air transport within the Australian sub-continent. He joined the Ministry

HUGH IRWIN

Hugh Irwin, CBE, a former assistant secretary at the Ministry of Transport, died on March 30 aged 86. He was born on March 21, 1911.

THE name of Hugh Irwin might strike a chord in the memory of those who have, during the last quarter of a century, piloted their craft through the locks and beside the quays of our inland waterways. As a Transport Ministry official in the late 1960s, he signed the official list of "dos" and "don'ts" — referred to at the time as "Irwin's by-laws" — displayed at strategic points along the banks.

He also helped to frame the

legislation, prompted by his enthusiastic minister, Barbara Castle, which restored the present network of canals and connecting rivers — designating some for recreational purposes, others for commerce.

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Appointed CBE in 1968, Irwin retired three years later at the age of 60 and thereafter devoted much of his time to voluntary work — especially for the Samaritans in the Tunbridge Wells area of Kent. A devout Christian, he was also active in his local church and diocese.

Hugh Irwin had no enemies in Whitehall. A kind, gentle person, with a whimsical sense of humour, he was perhaps too unassuming to

reach the dizzier heights of his profession — for which some thought his intellect equipped him and which his early promotion to assistant secretary might have led him to anticipate. But if he was privately disappointed, he did not show it.

He relaxed on the river at Twickenham, where he then lived, winning an assortment of sailing trophies in his own boat. He also kept up his languages, not only by travelling on the Continent, but by extensive reading in French and German.

He liked to practise his linguistic skills while in Whitehall, though these were not always appreciated. The Welsh-speaking junior minister (and later Secretary of State for Wales), John Morris, for whom Irwin had written a speech, once asked him if he could cut some of the French and German epithets with which Irwin had spiced it.

"You see Mr Irwin", he pointed out gently, "my own second language is English".

He married his wife Phyllis, the daughter of family friends in Dublin in 1934 in a wedding described by their local paper as a "marriage between north and south". They marked their golden wedding by sailing to America on the QE2 and went on to celebrate their diamond wedding three years ago.

Hugh Irwin had been suffering for the last ten years from Parkinson's disease, and donated his body to medical science in the hope of encouraging others to do the same. He died in a nursing home and is survived by his wife and by a son and a daughter.

JOHN ROSS

John Ross, CBE, civil servant, died on March 27 aged 88. He was born on March 31, 1908.



Nationality Division, retiring in the same year, 1968, that Enoch Powell delivered his notorious "rivers of blood" speech.

He was appointed CBE in 1967 and used his retirement to write an internal history of the Church of Scotland, on which he drew to write his own *Four Centuries of Scottish Worship* (1972). He also contributed the introduction to Cicero's *The Nature of the Gods* in the Penguin Classics series.

But his official life revealed only half the man. From his home in Hampstead Garden Suburb he was a regular attender at the Golders Green Presbyterian Church, serving it both as an elder and as session clerk. He was a frequent lay preacher and a formidable scholar and exponent of New Testament theology, an area where his knowledge of Ancient Greek stood him in good stead. He contributed to theological

periodicals and served for a time on the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches.

He accumulated a large library of ecclesiastical works, particularly on the history of the Church of Scotland, on which he drew to write his own *Four Centuries of Scottish Worship* (1972). He also contributed the introduction to Cicero's *The Nature of the Gods* in the Penguin Classics series.

In old age Ross's loss of hearing led to his gradual withdrawal from his many activities, including not only listening to classical music but playing it on his own clavichord and fortepiano. Yet his mind retained its energy and curiosity until the end.

He is survived by his wife Helen ("Nella"), and by two sons and two daughters, two daughters having predeceased him.

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John Ross, CBE, civil servant, died on March 27 aged 8

NEWS

Tories erode Labour poll lead

The election came alive for the first time last night as an opinion poll for *The Times* showed that the Conservatives have started to make big inroads into Labour's commanding lead.

The MORI poll, taken on Tuesday, puts the Tories on 34 per cent, up six points since last week, while Labour is down by a similar amount to 49 per cent. The Lib Dems are up a point at 12 per cent. Tony Blair's rating as the most capable Prime Minister has also dropped sharply. *Pages 1, 9-14, 12, 20, 21*

Middle England's tax burden

Tax changes since 1992 are costing the average household £7 a week, an independent study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies concludes. Those earning between £15,000 and £20,000 a year and the "traditional" single-earning family have been among the biggest losers from the tax rises. *Page 1*

Deer hunting ban

The National Trust is poised to ban deer hunting with hounds on its land after a two-year scientific study showed that the sport causes the animals unacceptable suffering. *Pages 1, 6*

Football fans policed

German police mounted a massive security operation as thousands of Manchester United fans converged on Dortmund for their team's Champions League semi-final. *Page 1*

US lawyers expand

American law firms in a new competition drive with the big London law firms have taken or are looking for an extra 17,000 sq ft — three acres — of office space in the City. *Page 2*

Tourist rape victim

An Austrian tourist in London was raped repeatedly by eight teenage boys and then thrown naked into a canal, an Old Bailey jury was told. *Page 15*

Rail suicides

Rail workers are being taught how to spot potential suicides in an attempt to reduce the number of people who take their own lives on the railway. *Page 5*

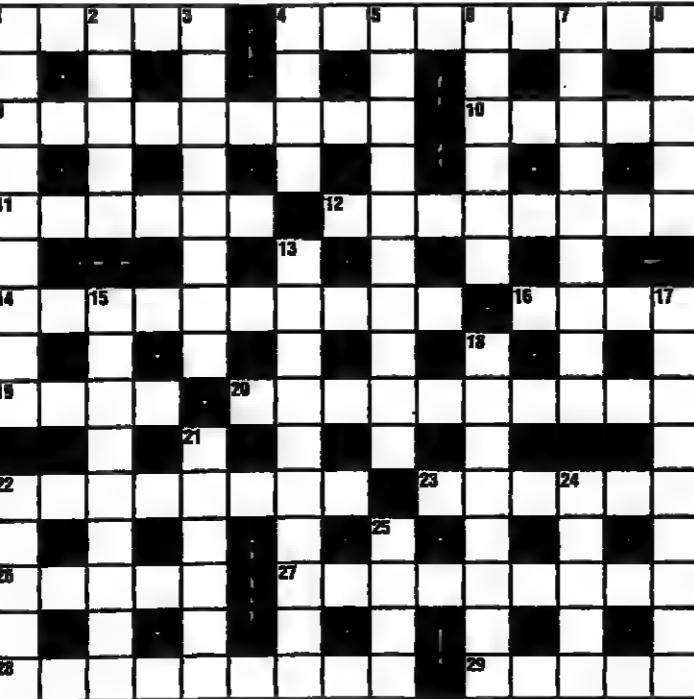
Research at risk

Doctors fear that the arrest of a sculptor suspected of stealing human remains may deter patients from donating their bodies for research. *Page 5*

Get a haircut to get ahead

Career women should get a haircut, eschew cardigans and above all, avoid looking like a secretary because they might be asked to make the coffee. The British Sociological Association also heard that big shoulder pads and high heels were a 1980s cliché. Today, tailored jackets with skirt or trousers, sensible shoes and subtle make-up are *de rigueur*. *Page 8*

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,450



ACROSS
1 Last of a series of twenty-four (5).
4 Affectionate donkey, say, gets a bed of straw (9).

9 How photographer achieves brilliance in news announcement to cry about (5,4).

10 Way Australian boulder starts to settle for the night (5).

11 Main route for movement of heavy guns without damage (6).

12 Mute, but can be understood (8).

14 Worried looks, say, at start of flight (10).

16 Short walk and a drink (4).

19 Sedate idiot (4).

20 Work oneself into a state to raise second XI (3,2,5).

22 Capacity gathering (8).

23 E.g. Marcel's musical fare (6).

26 Jolly girl starts to get rid of stilettos, perhaps (5).

27 One in charge of record store (9).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,449

SAFETY CURTAIN
E O I A O C O D
PAROCHIAL HANOI
A T K S L Y S S
RHYME SKIP SEMI
A P H O N P X N
TIBETAN GARNISH
E L A T I B S
TRAPPED HAMSTER
A C E E O A I
BAKE EVIL DIVOT
L B F I S O E A
ERASE CUT AND RUN
S L U E N S C
LEU L S I R D A M O R E

That Gazza feeling

Footballers stuck in the gloom of Division Three and the lesser leagues are suffering from "Shearerisation" and "Gascogneisation", according to a sociologist. *Page 8*

Gingrich fights back

Newt Gingrich, the battered Republican leader, is elbowing his way back to power in a final high-risk effort to salvage his plummeting career on *Capitol Hill*. *Page 16*

In from the cold

France's secret police and the counter-espionage agency made an unusual public defence of themselves against charges that they are incompetent, partisan and above the law. *Page 15*

German EMU doubts

One of Germany's top economic advisers cast doubt on the Government's ability to meet criteria for EMU, ahead of Franco-German talks in Bonn. *Page 15*

Mobutu urged to quit

America called on Zaire's ailing President Mobutu to step down and leave the country as fighting reached Kinshasa and rebels entered Lubumbashi. *Page 16*

Hong Kong curbs

Pro-democracy leaders in Hong Kong were dismayed by the government-in-waiting's plans to rein in political parties and curb street protests. *Pages 17, 20*

Get a haircut to get ahead

Career women should get a haircut, eschew cardigans and above all, avoid looking like a secretary because they might be asked to make the coffee. The British Sociological Association also heard that big shoulder pads and high heels were a 1980s cliché. Today, tailored jackets with skirt or trousers, sensible shoes and subtle make-up are *de rigueur*. *Page 8*



The sapphire, diamond and pearl tiara from a suite of jewellery which originally belonged to Queen Marie-Amélie of France (1782-1866) and is to be sold by Sotheby's in Geneva for the Comte and Comtesse de Paris. The suite is estimated to fetch £626,000.

SPORT

Rothschild: Three founders of J Rothschild Assurance will share a £37 million stake in a Rothschild company after a deal in which the Prudential takes effective control of JRA. *Page 25*

City risks: Trading and broking houses are to have tough new risk-ratings imposed on them by a front-line watchdog. *Page 25*

Poor advice: The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux has been forced to wind up the pension scheme it offers employees because it lacks funds. *Page 25*

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index rose 23.0 points to close at 4292.3. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 99.1 to 99.4 after a fall from £1.6236 to £1.6228 but a rise from DM2.778 to DM2.7909. *Page 28*

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ARTS

Boxing: The postponement of the Evander Holyfield-Mike Tyson rematch means the meeting of Lennox Lewis and Henry Akinwande may have to be moved from England to America. *Page 43*

Rugby union: Nick Popplewell, the Ireland and Newcastle prop, was fined and warned about his future conduct after throwing a punch in the Bedford match. *Page 45*

Sailing: Mike Golding and *Group 4* reached Cape Town 20 minutes ahead of Chris Tibbs' *Concert* at the end of the 6,200-mile fourth leg from Sydney. *Page 43*

Cricket: Ireland meet Scotland in the ICC Trophy third-place match in Kuala Lumpur today to determine which of them will play in the 1999 World Cup. *Page 35*

Video releases

Kurt Russell dons his eyepatch once more to play the maverick Snake Plissken from *LA*. John Carpenter's noisy, violent sequel to *Escape from New York*. *Page 34*

Star quality

Sian Phillips is as impressive as ever in the title role of Pam Gemi's *Mariene*, now transferred to the West End, but the play itself still falls flat. *Page 35*

ROBIN MAYES

TV LISTINGS
Preview: Will election history repeat itself? 1964 and All That (Channel 4, 9pm). Review: Peter Barnard on men who fell apart. *Pages 46, 47*

Endangered species

Over the remaining weeks *The Times* will seek to identify individual candidates who can make an unusual contribution to the next House of Commons. *Page 21*

Outrage in Brazil

The greatest challenge will be the promulgation of affordable social legislation, establishing a framework where abuses will be far less frequent. *Page 21*

Memento mori

Those who set out deliberately to offend against mankind's deepest taboos are tapping at the door of decadence. *Page 21*

GEORGE CAREY

Trust has become a significant electoral word. Behind it stands a vocabulary of moral terms that enrich the notion of trust: honesty, goodness, reliability, faithfulness, and honour. This is a vocabulary to be claimed not only by politicians but by all of us. *Page 20*

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

My hope is that the influence of Hong Kong will tip the balance in favour of genuine political modernisation. It already has its network of relationships with the coming generation in China, and could be the model for the next stage of Chinese development. *Page 20*

PETER RIDDELL

Today's MORI poll shift suggests that some of the Tory propaganda on the economy may have started to have an impact. *Page 12*

JOHN BRYANT

The week before a marathon is always tough. Perhaps the best thing you can do is put your feet up and read a good long book about sport. *Page 42*

THE PAPERS

It is far too early to call this a do-nothing Congress, but it has certainly been a done-nothing one so far. — *The Washington Post*

LOTTERY NUMBERS

6, 22, 35, 49, 45, 42. Bonus: 16. The estimated jackpot was £3,600,000.

The television debate; Martin Bell's candidature. *Page 21*

FEATURES

Porn broker: Geoff Brown finds himself rooting for the bad guy in *Milos Forman's The People vs. Larry Flynt*, a bracing portrait of the pornographer. *Page 19*

Half Nelson: *Mandela*, Jo Menell's biopic of the South African president, was intended to be a warts-and-all documentary. So where are the warts? *Page 33*

Just call: Dr Thomas Stuttaford on support for cancer patients; treatment for loose teeth that acts like garden rooting powder; side-effects of an epilepsy drug. *Page 18*

TRAVEL NEWS

Fresh start: Bosnia-Herzegovina this weekend will take its most public step to emerge from years of war when the Pope pays his first official visit to the battered capital, Sarajevo. *Page 39*

BOOKS

Delightful course: Derwent May on a book more interesting than it sounds — *How Proust Can Change Your Life*. Roger Scruton finds a theory of everything may be a theory of nothing; Peter Ackroyd on the wild life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. *Pages 36, 37*

THE PAPERS

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TOMORROW IN THE TIMES

IN THE TIMES

■ POP

David Sinclair on the return of Basildon boys

turned stadium rockers, Depeche Mode

■ FEATURES

Valerie Grove talks to the septuagenarian star

of University Challenge

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

FORECAST
with long, hazy sunny periods. Winds light westerly. Very warm. 19C (66F).

Aberdeen: Early mist and ground frost then dry, sunny periods. Cloudier later, outbreaks of rain towards nightfall. Winds moderate westerly. Mild. Max 15C (52F).

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England, NE England, Borders, Edinburgh and Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Moray Firth: Early mistiness and ground frost readily clearing. Then dry

with long, hazy sunny periods. Winds light westerly. Very warm. 19C (66F).

Cardiff: Early mist and ground frost then dry, sunny periods. Cloudier later, outbreaks of rain towards nightfall. Winds moderate westerly. Mild. Max 15C (52F).

Edinburgh: Early mist and ground frost then dry, sunny periods. Cloudier later, outbreaks of rain towards nightfall. Winds moderate westerly. Mild. Max 15C (52F).

London: Early mist and ground frost then dry, sunny periods. Cloudier later, outbreaks of rain towards nightfall. Winds moderate westerly. Mild. Max 15C (52F).

Wales: Early mist and ground frost then dry, sunny periods. Cloudier later, outbreaks of rain towards nightfall. Winds moderate westerly. Mild. Max 15C (52F).

Scotland: Early mist and ground frost then dry, sunny periods

THE TIMES

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TODAY



BUSINESS

Pensions worries
for parties, says
Graham Searjeant
PAGE 29



ARTS

Nice and sleazy
does it in a
fine new film
PAGES 33-35



SPORT

Norman seeks help
to recapture the
mastery of old
PAGES 41-48

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
46, 47

THURSDAY APRIL 10 1997

JRA founders in line for £37m bonus

BY MARIANNE CURPHEN, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

THE founders of J Rothschild Assurance, the life office set up by Lord Rothschild and Sir Mark Weinberg, stand to earn up to £12 million each after Prudential yesterday raised its stake in the company by an extra £40 million.

The move by Prudential, the UK's largest insurer, effectively gives it control over JRA just weeks after successfully bidding for Scottish Amicable.

Sir Mark set up JRA in 1991 with backing from Lord Rothschild. He left Allied Dunbar, which he founded in 1971, when it was taken over by BAT Industries in 1989, and established JRA with co-founders Mike Wilson and Keith Carby, both from Allied Dunbar. JRA quickly grew and the move is in effect a reverse takeover of its parent.

Sir Mark, Mr Wilson and Mr Carby will each make up to £24 million immediately from the deal when they sell up to 20 per cent in the restructured company to Prudential. Under the terms of the deal Prudential has tabled a £29.6 million plan to increase its stake in St James's Place Capital (SJPC), the life assurance and fund firm that owns 40 per cent of JRA. At the same time SJPC announced a £185 million deal to increase its stake in JRA to 100 per cent.

After the restructuring, Sir Mark and Mr Wilson's total stake will be worth £12 million, and Mr Carby's £10 million. Lord Rothschild yesterday sold three million SJPC shares but will continue to hold a £15 million stake in the new company, representing 3

per cent of its share capital. He will stand down from the board because of other commitments but will become president of SJPC. The restructured company is likely to have a market capitalisation of around £530 million.

If the deal is approved the three founders of JRA will become executive directors of SJPC and will hold a 7 per cent share worth £37 million, or up to £12 million each. All three will sit on the SJPC board, with Sir Mark as chairman and Mr Wilson and Mr Carby taking executive roles. They have agreed to sell to Prudential 20 per cent of the SJPC shares they will receive in exchange for their holdings in JRA. They will immediately make up to £2.4 million each in cash but have promised to keep 80 per cent of their stake for the first year.

The restructuring proposals announced yesterday carry a clause that gives the Rothschild family power to remove the name "J Rothschild" from

Prudential will tender 130p each for 30.5 million shares, representing a 7.7 per cent interest, to top up the Scottish Amicable JRA holding and its own 3.7 per cent stake.

Sir Peter Davis, group chief executive of Prudential, has said that he believes in the longer term it is in the interest of SJPC to remain independently managed and have a separate stock market listing.

Both deals are still subject to shareholder approval, but could be completed by June.

Tempus, page 28
City Diary, page 29

Weinberg: 'reverse takeover'



Bob Jones, foreground, with Richard Connell, left, and Chris Ward in a Warrior armoured personnel carrier yesterday

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDEXES	
FTSE 100	4282.3 (-23.0)
FTSE All share	3,719.4 (-17.7)
Nikkei	20,555.55 (+10.37)
New York	17702.57 (-12.53)
Dow Jones	8,077.07 (-12.09)*
S&P Composite	763.35 (-0.76)

US RATE	
Federal Funds	5.00% (5.00%)
Long Bonds	8.00% (8.00%)
Yield	7.10% (7.10%)

LONDON MONEY	
3-month investment	8.00% (8.00%)
Long gilt future (Jun)	10.0% (10.0%)

STERLING	
New York	1.6280* (1.6280)
London	1.6280 (1.6280)
DM	0.3932 (0.3972)
FT	2.3524 (2.3565)
SP	205.38 (204.63)
Yen	98.4 (99.1)
£ Index	108.6 (105.5)

US DOLLAR	
London	1.7248* (1.7160)
FT	0.4770* (0.4750)
SP	125.89* (126.31)
Yen	108.6 (105.5)
£ Index	108.6 (105.5)

Parsons sold

Siemens, the German electronics group, has acquired Parsons Power Generation from Rolls-Royce for £30 million. The deal will save 880 jobs in Newcastle upon Tyne. Page 26. Pennington 27

Biggest deal

Procter & Gamble, the hygiene and household goods group, is making its largest purchase, having agreed to buy Tambrands for \$1.8 billion. Page 30

EDS ahead on official IT contracts

BY JON ASHWORTH

UP TO ten million former servicemen and women are to be offered credit cards, insurance schemes and personal loans under a £104 million deal with Naafi, the long-time purveyor of tea and cakes to the Armed Forces.

Both deals are still subject to shareholder approval, but could be completed by June.

Warrior Group, a joint venture between Naafi and HSBC Private Equity, has won the contract to provide financial services to past and present

members of the Armed Forces. Naafi lost a £40 million food supply contract to Booker in January and is furiously streamlining operations. Spar has effectively taken over the running of Naafi shops and Lanica Trust is backing a new mail order venture.

Bob Jones becomes chief executive of Warrior, which takes in Naafi's existing financial services division. He took the helm of a Warrior armoured personnel carrier

yesterday assisted by Richard Connell, a director of HSBC Private Equity, and Chris Ward of Deloitte & Touche Corporate Finance, which advised on the deal. Ian Lindsay, former banking director at Sime & Prosper, becomes non-executive chairman.

About 30,000 of Britain's 300,000 serving members of the forces hold Naafi credit cards and other financial products. Mr Jones said: "Military customers are relatively

young, highly mobile and have very different financial needs to the man in the street." The aim is to widen the net to include millions of former Armed Forces members.

Geoffrey Dart, Naafi's chief executive, said that the money raised from the transaction would help Naafi with its restructuring, and allow it to modernise its pubs, clubs and leisure centres.

Naafi has a 32 per cent stake in Warrior.

SFA plans tighter risk-rating system

BY ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

CITY trading and broking houses are to have tough new risk ratings imposed on them by a frontline watchdog.

Next week the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the regulator for brokers and futures dealers, will unveil plans to introduce the risk-rating system. This could fundamentally alter the way City firms deal with each other, particularly in the volatile futures and options markets.

Incidents such as the £830 million collapse of Barings and NatWest Markets' £90 million black hole that remained undetected for about two years, have prompted City watchdogs, including the Bank of England, to impose more precise risk-rating programmes.

Members of the SFA will be told their individual ratings this summer. They will be based on scores of one for the least risky through to five. The risk ratings will determine the level of attention and inspection visits made by the watchdog and the amount of spare capital they will have to post to cover their business exposure in the markets. In future SFA firms may decide whether to do business together.

In moving from a pilot project to the final risk-rating plan the SFA says: "Suitability of internal controls and the experience and competence of a firm's staff and management are now given a heavier weighting."

Tempus, page 28

ARE YOU PAYING TOO MUCH FOR YOUR LIFE ASSURANCE?

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Black Horse Life	46.38
Scottish Amicable	48.00
Scottish Life	58.51

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Nationwide Life	83.50
Barclays Life	86.00
Friends Provident	88.99
Black Horse Life	101.68
Scottish Amicable	108.00
Scottish Life	137.40

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THE National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (Nacab), has been forced to wind up the pension scheme that it offers employees because the scheme does not have enough funds.

The collapse of the scheme was an embarrassment to Nacab, which employs staff specifically to advise the public about financial matters. Nacab is taking legal action against Bruce & Partners, an independent financial

adviser that administered the scheme, seeking compensation for losses that could run into thousands of pounds.

The pension scheme, set up more than ten years ago, offered employees guaranteed benefits linked to their final salary. It now appears that the scheme does not have enough funds to meet these guarantees.

David Evans, Nacab director of personnel, said: "Having realised the scheme was not viable, Nacab has mounted a rescue package. We greatly

regret the anxiety caused to members by the failure of the scheme. Arrangements are being made for the transfer of funds to approximately 130 members of the scheme, and everything possible has been done to wind up the scheme in an orderly fashion."

A High Court action against the independent financial adviser, is expected to be heard later this year.

The pension was managed by Crown Financial Management, which was taken over by another company, Centu-

ry Life, late in 1992. Many of the company pension schemes offered by Crown are now being wound up. They were sold by financial advisers to small companies in the late 1980s. They had high charges and paid high rates of commission to advisers. According to the Pensions Ombudsman, about 5,000 former Crown schemes, with total membership of 80,000 people, are being wound up by Century. Bruce &

TransCo inquiry extended by MMC

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into price curbs planned for TransCo BG's gas pipeline network has been extended until the end of next month. The outcome of the inquiry will not now be known until after the general election.

Until Tuesday night, the investigation, which will determine whether householders get a £28 cut in bills and BG loses about £650 million in sales next year, had been scheduled for completion next Monday. But the MMC asked for more time amid speculation that the new information involved revised estimates by TransCo of its operating costs. Significant new information is also thought to have come from Ofgas. Estimates by TransCo of its running costs would be of critical importance to the inquiry.

An MMC spokesman said delays to reports were only asked for "when it was absolutely imperative". The extension follows an 11th-hour meeting between the MMC and Clare Spottiswoode, the gas regulator.

The MMC report will go to the President of the Board of Trade for consideration before publication. Its findings will inevitably cause controversy. If the MMC supports TransCo's appeals against price curbs it will trigger complaints from the gas industry, not least the independent gas suppliers.

A favourable report for Ofgas would have BG warning of job cuts and shareholder losses. The MMC denied that the political climate had influenced its timetable.

A spokeswoman for BG denied the company had made available fresh information and said BG had responded to requests within the timescale. Ofgas said it had given extra information at the request of the MMC.

Pennington, page 27

Channel 5 seals £86m Hollywood film deal



Mel Gibson's *Ransom* is one of the films included in Channel 5's deal with Warner Brothers which ITV has criticised

Siemens buys ailing R-R power generation plant

By OLIVER AUGUST

SIEMENS, the German electricals group, has acquired Parsons Power Generation from Rolls-Royce for £30 million. The long-awaited deal, which excludes the power station construction business, will save 880 jobs in Newcastle upon Tyne but a further 400 jobs could be lost when existing contracts end next year.

Siemens will integrate the turbine and rotor divisions into its worldwide operations. Its stake in Parsons amounts to turnover of £60 million, out of a total of £150 million, and two thirds of the North Tyneside site. Jürgen Gehrels, chief

executive of Siemens UK, said: "We didn't take over 880 people to make them redundant. But there is no guarantee. The only guarantee we will give is that productivity will improve, and Parsons has a long way to go."

Earlier this year Herr Gehrels suggested that Siemens would never invest in Newcastle if Britain rejects a single currency and the European Union. Yesterday he said: "No British Government would be so foolish to do that. Not just Newcastle, all our activities here in the UK would be in jeopardy. We

not to make power stations."

Under Siemens, Parsons will be run by Horst Münstermann, who will be assisted by Bob Hepburn. Herr Münstermann said that he wanted to improve productivity by introducing new management techniques.

Siemens will also assist the remaining 400 Rolls-Royce workers to complete existing power station contracts on a sub-contractor basis. The Parsons plant is only five miles from Siemens new £1 billion semiconductor plant.

Siemens also bought the rights to the Parsons name. Herr Gehrels said: "I hope the name will not disappear. We will use it in some way, though

Pennington, page 27

Windfall tax could hit customers

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR'S plans for a windfall tax on the privatised utilities could mean higher prices for customers and throw a cloud over employment prospects in the companies. Criticism from the Institute of Fiscal Studies fuels fears over the implications of the tax already raised by the electricity regulator and political opponents.

The IFS, looking at how the tax might be applied, said the tax illustrated a "troubling" trend by politicians to craft taxes to suit political objectives.

Lucy Chennells, senior research economist at the IFS, said although the windfall tax — which is expected to raise upwards of £3 billion to fund youth employment — would

be imposed on companies, "people pay the tax in the end".

The IFS also said that the tax was inequitable because it would hit present shareholders of utilities who are not necessarily those investors which enjoyed benefits from the companies.

Ground rules, page 29

Oftel moves nearer to a free phone market

By ERIC REGULY

OFTEL, the telecommunications regulator, yesterday moved closer towards the creation of a free phone market with proposals to make number portability, which allows customers to keep their phone number when they change operators, mandatory across the industry.

The lack of portability was considered a major barrier to unfettered competition in the residential and business phone markets.

Oftel wants to make number portability a licence obligation for all operators. Currently, only British Telecom is required to provide portability. The cable com-

panies welcomed the announcement. They have been the prime beneficiaries of BT's portability obligation and expect to gain more customers as the system becomes universal.

The cable companies had 2.3 million telephone customers at the start of the year and are gaining more than 70,000 new customers each month, mostly from BT.

Don Cruckshank, Director-General of Telecommunications, said: "Number portability eliminates the hassle of changing your phone number when changing operator. This enables consumers to take advantage of the increasing competition in the market."

SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND AND LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 183rd Annual General Meeting of the members of the Society will be held within the Sidlaw Auditorium, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, The Exchange, Edinburgh EH3 8EE on Tuesday 6 May 1997 at 11.30am for the following purposes:

- To consider the Accounts and Balance Sheets for the year ended 31 December 1996 and the Reports of the Directors and Auditors.
- To elect or re-elect Directors.
- To fix the remuneration of Directors.
- To re-appoint Price Waterhouse as Auditors.
- To authorise the Directors to fix the remuneration of the Auditors for the current year.
- To transact any other ordinary business proper to an Annual General Meeting.

A member is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him. A proxy need not also be a member of the Society. To be effective, proxies (and the power of attorney or other authority, if any, under which it is signed, or a notarially certified copy of that power of attorney) must reach the Society's principal office not less than two clear working days before the time for holding the Meeting. Members or proxies who intend to be present at the meeting should bring with them details of their policy numbers or in the case of proxies the policy numbers in respect of which they have been appointed proxy, and in all cases some means of identification. Registration will commence at 11.00am.

T B Houston SSC
Group Legal Adviser and Secretary
15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh EH16 5BU

3 April 1997

THE TIMES THURSDAY APRIL 10 1997

BUSINESS REGULATIONS

Election 'slowing home loan advances'

RESEARCH published today by one of the leading mortgage lenders claims that home loan advances are being held up by the election campaign. The mortgage arm of Barclays says that "since the announcement of the date for the general election, people's optimism about house prices and home moving, which has been growing steadily over the past 12 months, has begun to slow down". The latest Barclays Mortgage Index shows that the value of gross mortgage advances in March was 15 per cent compared with the same period last year. Monthly home loan advances last month were 24 per cent up on February.

Jim Chadwick, a director of Barclays Mortgages, says: "The dip in consumers' confidence... is likely to be reflected in mortgage advances later in the year. It is unfortunate that people are holding back at an ideal time to buy a home."

Rolls-Royce sales ahead

SALES of Rolls-Royce cars motored ahead in the first quarter, according to Vickers, the luxury car manufacturer's owner. Worldwide sales rose 13 per cent to 446 cars, compared with 396 for January to March 1996. UK sales rose to 236 from 158 for the same period in 1996. However, sales on the Continent and in the Middle East fell sharply. In America, sales rose a modest 2 per cent to 92 cars. Overall, sales are on course to top last year's total of 1,744.

Antonov suspended

SHARES in Antonov, the engineering design company, were suspended yesterday amid speculation that it has found the first major customer for its revolutionary automatic gearbox. The shares, which rose 14 per cent to 103½p on Tuesday, were suspended at 164½p. Antonov has yet to see a profit. Its AIM-listed shares fell from 158p to 48p last year after its failure to win any sale for its gearbox, claimed to be more efficient and cheaper to make than others. An announcement is due today.

Ascot on dividend list

ASCOT HOLDINGS, the property group turned conglomerate, is paying its first dividend since November 1991. Shareholders will receive 3.9p per share on June 23. The company made a pre-tax profit £5.9 million in the year to December 31. In the previous year, which is not directly comparable because of the acquisition of Suter and because the year end had been changed, the profit was £19.5 million. Fully diluted earnings per share were 10.5p (59.8p).

Dowding's dull start

DOWDING & MILLS, the electrical and mechanical repair company, said that it had had a slow start to the year, but that it should still be able to lift profits by the year end. The company, which has increased its profits by 30 per cent for the past four years, said that it cannot guarantee maintaining this growth rate. Pre-tax profits rose 27 per cent, to £7.12 million, in the last six months of 1996. Earnings per share were 2.84p (2.29p). An interim dividend of 1.13p is due on May 8.

Shield switches to UBS

SHIELD DIAGNOSTICS, the high-flying company with a promising heart disease test, has appointed UBS as its brokers and financial advisers in place of Greig Middleton. Two weeks ago Gordon Hall, Shield's chief executive, said the company was "working quite happily with Greig Middleton". Yesterday he said Shield is moving to take advantage of UBS's larger operation. Shield's shares, down 7½p to 662½p yesterday, have more than quadrupled this year.

TV group name change

SCOTTISH TELEVISION, the ITV company, is to change its name to Scottish Media Group to reflect its broader activities in the media sector. Scottish Television began to diversify late last year with the £120 million purchase of Caledonian Publishing, of Glasgow, owner of *The Herald* and *Evening Times*. It said the name change is subject to shareholder approval. Caledonian is making strong contributions to profit and the City expects newspaper interests to expand.

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank
Australia \$ 2.18	2.02	Malta	0.867	0.862
Austria Sch 20.24	10.10	New Zealand \$ 0.49	0.49	0.49
Belgium Fr 60.50	52.00	Norway Kr 2.27	11.78	11.58
Canada \$ 2.273	2.203	Portugal Esc 0.863	281.50	271.52
Cyprus Cyp 0.863	0.863	S Africa R 7.78	1.15	1.15
Denmark Kr 11.16	10.00	S Spain Pta 0.863	22.00	22.00
Finland Mark 8.84	8.78	Sweden Kr 18.82	12.22	12.22
France Fr 2.94	2.72	Switzerland Fr 2.52	2.52	2.52
Germany Dm 4.24	4.00	USA \$ 1.72	1.72	1.72
Hong Kong \$ 11.93	12.23	UK £ 1.72	1.72	1.72
Iceland Fr 120	100	Rates for email circulation bank rates as supplied by Barclays Bank		
Israel Sheq 1.10	1.02	Malta	0.867	0.862
Italy Lira 2.83	2.702	New Zealand \$ 0.49	0.49	0.49
Japan Yen 219.80	203.00	Norway Kr 2.27	11.78	11.58

Rates for email circulation bank rates as supplied by Barclays Bank

Different rates apply to bank's cheques.

Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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Deferral of MMC pipeline ruling looks advisable Ken and Eddie go through the motions Great name sold for a song

□ MANY have tried to second-guess the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and place bets on the outcome of its various deliberations before they are revealed to the world. Those investors who have been buying into BG, one half of the old British Gas, are the latest in a long line. The success rate of such gamblers has tended to be about fifty-fifty, which suggests they would have done as well on the roulette wheel.

The MMC is a hermetically sealed institution. The panel takes evidence from anyone affected — in BG's case, in the inquiry into charges allowed by its TransCo pipeline subsidiary, from the company, from the Office of Gas Regulation (Ofgas), from various consumer groups pushing for lower prices and from independent gas suppliers.

With each witness the inquiry tends to take a devil's advocate position, requiring them to defend their respective positions. This may be taken by those involved as opposition to that position. The rash of stories that the MMC was inclined to weaken the tough proposals put forward by Clare Spottiswoode of Ofgas may have come from just such an assumption by one of the gas independents.

The rumours have pushed the BG share price up by 20p or so since the end of last month. Then Ms Spottiswoode was called into the MMC on Tuesday, an unusual step just days before its report was due. Surely she was being warned that she was about to be undermined by the only court of appeal available to regulated companies, the MMC?

Beautifully logical, and wrong, wrong, wrong. The MMC was telling her that its inquiry would be extended until after the election. This means, at least if one believes the opinion polls, that the final arbiter of its decision will not be Ian Lang, the current President of the Board of Trade.

On this basis a deferral of the ruling looks sensible, not least because of Mr Lang's refusal to decide on pretty well anything ahead of the election. The implications for BG and its share price are — well, your guess is as good as the next speculator's. The ruling is not going to be worse than Ms Spottiswoode's proposals — but it might be no

better. BG assures us,

that it would be a disaster. The market is assuming they would lead to a cut in the dividend to former British Gas shareholders from 14.5p last year to about 5p, all from BG as the other successor company, Centrica, is in no position to pay dividends.

On that basis, BG's current share price is hard to defend. If the dividend has to come down any more — and on some calculations of what would be left of TransCo earnings it may have to be halved again — the price is way ahead of events.

We simply do not know. Anyone who tells you otherwise may have their own reasons for talking up the BG share price.

When growth is booming

□ WHEN is a boom not a boom, but steady, sustainable economic growth? The answer is three weeks before the election — unless you happen to be a slogan

writer for the Conservatives. Such a novel interpretation of economics is unlikely to feature at today's little chat between Kenneth Clarke and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, but this is only because both know their parts in the dialogue too well to need any more prompting.

Mr George will opine that base rates should be at anything up to 7 per cent. He will know he is wasting his breath, but it will be useful practice for the May meeting with whoever is Chancellor then. Mr Clarke may cite yesterday's industrial production data, saying industry is too

fragile to support a rise in base rates. This is not that unreasonable. Industrial production was depressed by one-off falls in energy output, and this will reverse in due course.

But manufacturing output was only growing at 1.3 per cent year-on-year, a long way from excessive. Strong sterling will continue to hit companies that have only just brought stocks into line with lower continental demand. A high pound for too long, and more of UK manufacturing may be at risk as companies decide it is an economic fact of life and decide to build it into their investment plans.

Yesterday's figures and last week's data on the service sector, now growing at 4 per cent or so, show that the two-speed economy is well established. You cannot slow down one part without endangering the other, an argument turned on its head by Mr George last week when he suggested that protection for manufacturing was no excuse for stoking up inflation. Such

chicken-and-egg arguments will feature high on the agenda of whoever occupies No 11 this summer.

Sad history of Parsons

□ IT IS enough to make you weep. Parsons, one of the great names of British engineering, is being sold for just £30 million.

The tangled history of heavy engineering in the North East provides a telling barometer of industrial decline. Sir Charles Parsons, inventor of the steam turbine, formed the company in 1890. He was a man worthy of inclusion on the same list as James Watt, John Logie Baird and Isambard Kingdom Brunel, which is where he appeared recently in a poll of scientists asked by *The Times* for a roll call of British inventive genius.

At the same time, a French immigrant, Alphonse Reynold, was starting to make switching gear in the North East. The two

came together — Reynold is staying with Rolls-Royce — and found their way into Northern Engineering Industries, a name with a rather hollow ring today. Rolls-Royce bought NEI for £300 million in 1989, by which time the decline of Parsons was probably unstoppable. Its main customer was the old CEBG, until this was broken up. Like much of British engineering, Parsons waited for the world to come to it, and the world stayed away.

The company was knocked out to Siemens; on the same day, the financial services arm of the Naafi, a body that few outside the Services can have even known existed, went for more than three times the asking price for Parsons. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

Holiday discord

□ A SURVEY of finance directors, carried out by the indefatigable Reed Accountancy Personnel, shows that nine out of ten believe it is vital for people to take their full holiday entitlement in order to function, but less than two thirds of them do so. Translated, this says that we are nearly all of us responsible, caring employers, but at least a third of us are too important to skip work for all that long.

Tomkins pays £372m for US automotive company

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

TOMKINS, the conglomerate whose interests span Smith & Wesson and Rank Hovis McDougall, has agreed to buy Stant Corporation of America for £372 million.

Stant, which is quoted on Nasdaq, manufactures automotive components, including windshield wipping systems, wiper blades, closure caps and engine thermostats. It will be integrated with Tomkins' last major acquisition, the US automotive hosemaker Gates, for which it paid £750 million last year.

Stant has more than 7,000 employees and last year achieved sales of £403 million. Greg Hutchings, executive chairman of Tomkins, said

that the integration will take about a year but that the deal will be earnings-enhancing immediately.

He said that Tomkins is continuing to look for other acquisitions and would be happy to spend a similar amount or more if an opportunity appeared, but another bolt-on to Gates is unlikely.

Tomkins is launching a tender offer for all Stant's shares at \$21.50 per share in cash, valuing Stant's total equity at £249 million. This will be paid from Tomkins' cash resources. It will also assume £123 million of debt. At the half-year, Tomkins had cash of £394 million.

Bessemer Capital Partners

of New York, which owns 56.9 per cent of Stant's issued capital, has agreed to tender its shares to Tomkins.

Tomkins hopes to close the deal in the middle of next month, subject to US regulatory approval.

In the year to December 31, Stant's operating profit was £34.7 million and pre-tax profit was £23.8 million. Net assets were £123 million, including intangibles.

Mr Hutchings said: "Stant expands our product offering to the automotive original equipment market and increases the range of volume or products we can distribute through Gates's established channels to the aftermarket."

There will be cost savings because Tomkins will not need to maintain two marketing operations, he added.

Mr Hutchings has been under some pressure from investors to buy back shares but he has insisted that such a move would stifle Tomkins' ability to consider large takeovers. He said yesterday that the new acquisition "demonstrates the effectiveness of our strategy of maintaining cash as a strategic asset in readiness for suitable acquisition opportunities".

The City reacted well to yesterday's deal and Tomkins' shares rose 7.2p to 232.2p.

Tempus, page 28

Smiths has £400m for acquisition

SMITHS INDUSTRIES, the aircraft electronics and medical instruments group, could afford to spend up to £400 million on its next acquisition without seeking more money from its shareholders, it emerged yesterday (Paul Durman writes).

Aian Thomson, finance director, said Smiths could borrow this amount before thinking about issuing new shares. City analysts believe that the company's strong cashflow would allow it to spend up to £500 million.

Smiths was reporting a 15 per cent rise in underlying pre-tax profits to £80.2 million for the six months to February 1. The interim dividend rises 10 per cent to 6.15p a share.

Tempus, page 28

Revenue boost for Allders

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

A SURPRISE concession by the Inland Revenue has led Allders, the retail group, to revise plans for a share consolidation that were aborted last year after Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, scrapped tax benefits on some special dividend schemes.

The concession raises hopes for other companies that were forced by the change in rules to forgo special dividend plans. These include Reuters, the news and financial information group, which pulled out of a plan to return £613 million to shareholders through special dividend shares.

Allders is now advising shareholders to vote in favour of a 15-for-19 consolidation. Assuming that it goes ahead, Allders will be able to release a £15 million provision made to cover the cost of compensating the option holders who had stood to lose out under the altered deal.

Bonus deal nets Thistle chief £1.3m

ROBERT PEEL, chief executive of the newly floated Thistle Hotels, received £1.3 million in 1996 (George Sivell writes). The annual report and accounts show his salary and fees of £264,000 were enhanced with £1.01 million of performance related share bonuses and one-off bonuses.

Norbert Petersen, senior operations director, received £664,537, made up of £153,819 salary and £502,673 share and one-off cash bonuses.

Mr Peel and Mr Petersen received a £500,000 and £250,000 cash bonus respectively to replace entitlements agreed to when Thistle was acquired by Brierley Investments in 1992.

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND NOTICE OF LOCAL INQUIRY

Supplementary Review of European Parliamentary Constituencies

NOTICE is given today, 10 April 1997, that local inquiries are to be held by the Boundary Commission for England into their provisional recommendations, made under the European Parliamentary Elections Act 1976 (as amended) for the European Parliamentary Constituencies (EPC) listed below. The Commission published their provisional recommendations on 7 November 1996.

1) For the East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire (No.7) EPC, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioner, Mr Richard Stans, Barrister-at-Law. It will open on:

TUESDAY 7 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, CROSS STREET, BEVERLEY

2) For the Lancashire (No.8), Lancashire South (No.9), Merseyside East and West (No.10), Merseyside West (No.11), Greater Manchester East (No.12), Greater Manchester Central (No.13), Cheshire West and Wirral (No.14), Greater Manchester West (No.15) and St Helens (No.16) EPCs, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, Mr Alan Doherty, Barrister-at-Law. It will open on:

TUESDAY 1 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MANCHESTER

3) For the West Derby (No.22), Northumbria North and Chesterfield (No.23), Nottingham and Leicestershire North West (No.24), Leicester (No.25) and Northumbria and St Helens (No.26) EPCs, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, Mr James Gibbs, Barrister-at-Law. It will open on:

TUESDAY 1 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HOUSE, MARKET SQUARE, NOTTINGHAM

4) For the Herefordshire and Shropshire (No.31), Birmingham West (No.32), Birmingham East (No.34), Worcester and South Warwickshire (No.38) and Gloucestershire (No.41) EPCs, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, Miss Clare Andrews, Barrister-at-Law. It will open on:

TUESDAY 7 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, WORCESTER

5) For the East North and Sefton (No.43) and East and West Hertfordshire East (No.44) EPCs, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, Mr William Stans, Barrister-at-Law. It will open on:

TUESDAY 7 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD

6) For the Kent West (No.51), Kent East (No.52), Sussex West (No.53) and East Sussex and Kent South (No.56) EPCs, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, Mr Peter Birtwistle QC. It will open on:

MONDAY 14 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, TUNBRIDGE WELLS

7) For the Bristol (No.46), Wiltshire North and Bath (No.47), Hampshire North and Oxford (No.48), Devon and Cornwall (No.53), Devon, Test and Awre (No.54), Wight and Hampshire South (No.55), South Downs West (No.56), Cornwall and West Plymouth (No.59), Devon and East Plymouth (No.60) and Dorset and East Devon (No.61) EPCs, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, Mr George Barden QC. It will open on:

TUESDAY 21 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE, SOUTHAMPTON

8) For the Thames (No.50), Surrey (No.51), London North West (No.62), London North (No.63), London East (No.64), London South East (No.65), London South Inner (No.66), London South West (No.67) and London South and Surrey East (No.71) EPCs, the inquiry will be conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, Mr Andrew Stans. It will open on:

MONDAY 21 JULY 1997 AT 10.30AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, BORNTHORPE, KENNINGTON

9) Any other person, whether a supporter or objector to the Commission's proposals may attend and be heard. The Commission will invite all interested parties to attend and make their views known. It should not be assumed that each inquiry will only discuss matters raised at representations submitted within the period allowed, nor that the Commission's provisional recommendations will remain unchanged.

Representations made in respect of the remaining European Parliamentary Constituencies did not require local inquiries to be held and the Commission decided not to use their discretion to hold any further inquiries.

The provisional recommendations, copies of the representations made to the Commission (together with a summary) and a statement made by the Commission, which will be introduced formally at each inquiry, are open for public inspection at:

Inquiry No.1 - Beverley (Yorkshire)

HUMBERSIDE (former non-metropolitan county):

Council Offices, Asby House, ANLBAY, Council Offices, The Hall, Largate, BEVERLEY; Town Hall, BRIDLINGTON;

Haven House, Station Road, BRIGG; Town Hall, HESSE; Greenwood Avenue Library, Greenwood Avenue, HULL;

Goldhill, Alfred Street, HULL; Pinewood House, Asby Road, SUNTHORPE.

Inquiry No.2 - Manchester (Northwest)

Council Offices, The Forum, CHESTER; Municipal Buildings, Castle Street, CREWE; Council Offices, 4 Civic Way,

Crewe, Cheshire; County Hall, CHESHIRE; County Hall, BRIDGEND; County Hall, ST ALBANS;

COLCHESTER; County Hall, West Street, OLDHAM; Finsbury Library, Finsbury Avenue, LONDON;

MIDDLETON; Civic Centre, West Street, SANDHURST; County Hall, ST ALBANS; ST ALBANS;

WALTHAM CROSS; County Hall, SWINDON; County Hall, WATFORD; County Hall, WATFORD; County Hall, WATFORD;

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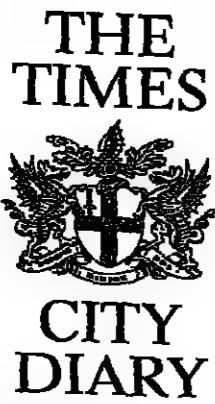
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Sleepless partner

PUTTING the finishing touches to the deal that gave Prudential a stake of almost 30 per cent in St James' Place Capital, left Sir Mark Weinberg with only 55 minutes sleep on Tuesday. What's more, Prudential's bid for Scottish Amicable delayed the announcement of St James' Place Capital's nine-month results by almost a week.

The critical area is secondary pensions for

Most of the poorest adults in society are over 65. Most of them have to rely on the basic state pension. They were in low-paid jobs with no pension, or moved around with bouts of unemployment in between, or worked for themselves and could not afford to save money outside the business. Many were just too busy looking after a family to be in the official workforce. All these once shrinking groups are now growing again. Meanwhile, the basic state pension has been shrinking relative to national income for 16 years.

No wonder means-tested benefits are mushrooming, even though an estimated 600,000 pensioners do not claim their full entitlement. No wonder the main parties are worried about the state earnings-related pensions scheme, which was unfavourably introduced on a unfunded basis. Serps is now starting to cost burgeoning billions with a dwindling rate of new contributions to match them. No wonder that both Tories and Labour want to help, persuade or dragon more unprovided people into some form of privately-funded secondary pension.

To that extent, a consensus exists around ideas that the National Association of Pension Funds helped to develop. Policies recently diverged. Peter Lilley, Social Security Secretary, came up with Basic Pension Plus too late for Labour to respond. Common ground remains. No one seems quite to have cracked the issue. And either party seems liable to damage existing private pension and savings schemes by mistake.

The critical area is secondary pensions for

Parties hunt for the pensions golden goose, then kill it


GRAHAM SEARJEANT

the lower paid. As many learnt to their cost, individually tailored personal pensions are just too expensive. Replacing Serps with something better requires some simple, low-cost alternative to personal pensions with some choice of provider.

Within an eclectic menu of savings schemes, Labour opts for the "stakeholder" pension. This might be organised on a standard basis by big insurance companies, affinity groups or friendly societies (probably trade unions) or via industry-wide schemes such as those being developed for Unity Trust Bank. So far, however, Labour assumes that the minimum contribution need be no more than the full rebate of National Insurance contributions for contracting out of Serps, less than 5 per cent of income. Anything else must be voluntary.

Mr Lilley spent a lot of time on similar ideas and could not make the economics work. That is why he dreamt up the more drastic notion of converting the basic pension into a privately funded scheme as well. Adding the two together gives enough cash to keep percentage costs low and, eventually, yield a higher base pension.

Basic Pension Plus involves so drastic a

change that it would not help anyone drawing a pension for nearly 50 years. To fund the transition, today's schoolchildren would lose tax relief on all pension contributions, removing much of the incentive to channel any further savings into inefficible pensions funds. Privatising the basic pension would also require the State to help those who could not afford contributions. Means-tested benefits will be boosted again. Inevitably, more working-age folk will become enmeshed in the benefit trap. The Tory scheme could, on present

policies, eventually provide a bigger pension for have-nots than Labour's stakeholder plan. Either still looks inadequate on its own. Saving less than 5 per cent of income will not keep people at a decent standard in retirement. A minimum is 10 per cent.

People need some help on the basic state pension, at least for the next 60 years. Now that the "demographic timebomb" has been exposed as a hoax, it is clear that the cost of the basic state pension will fall as a percentage of national income more or less continuously over the next 50 years if it is indexed only to prices. If the basic pension budget was kept at its reduced level of about 4 per cent of national income, the pension would rise steadily in real terms, although not as fast as earnings. Labour has avoided any such commitment, presumably because, like the Tories, it wants to raid the basic pension to meet the unfunded Serps burden.

The second essential is to avoid damaging successful existing occupational pensions and savings schemes such as personal equity plans. The Tories rightly crow that the envious rest of the EU together cannot match Britain's £650 billion invested pension funds. Only a fool imagines that

this success had nothing to do with a kindly pension tax regime. Government will interfere with it at our peril.

Labour is expected to attack the dividend privileges of pension funds, charities and Peps as a conveniently "hidden" tax worth a gross £8 billion a year. The tax may be hidden, but the results are clear. The retirement income people earn by saving in personal pensions, money-purchase occupational schemes or Labour's stakeholder scheme would be cut. Employees in final salary schemes might be all right, if employers stump up the extra funding needed. If they do, under the tougher solvency provisions of the Pensions Act 1995 the net tax gain from pension funds might be zero. More likely, more employers will join the drift to cheap defined contribution schemes that will deliver much lower pensions.

Limiting or abolishing contribution relief, as under Basic Pension Plus, looks equally ill-advised. These reliefs are not just incentives to save. They boost returns. If reliefs are cut, ordinary people's pensions will eventually be cut.

If more people are to earn decent secondary pensions, reliefs must not be watered down, either for fiscal logic or short-term Treasury greed. To minimise compulsion, politicians must trust people to save as they will and as they can in more flexible schemes such as Peps and, one hopes, Labour's Individual Savings Account. If politicians try hard yet find solutions so elusive, they had better trust market forces more.

Christine Buckley looks at the practicalities of setting the utilities levy

Ground rules for Labour's windfall tax

Privately, some anxious Tories representing marginal constituencies have been criticising utilities for being wimpish. These Conservatives are incensed that companies are apparently prepared to give in so easily to a windfall tax. One gave a verbal battering to a generator, incredulous that it was not shouting from the rooftops its opposition to a tax that would wipe millions from profits.

Most utilities have indeed been curiously quiet, although the Conservatives would welcome as a political filip a threatened wholesale rebellion from the utilities. But it will not happen before the election and is unlikely afterwards in the face of a Labour government.

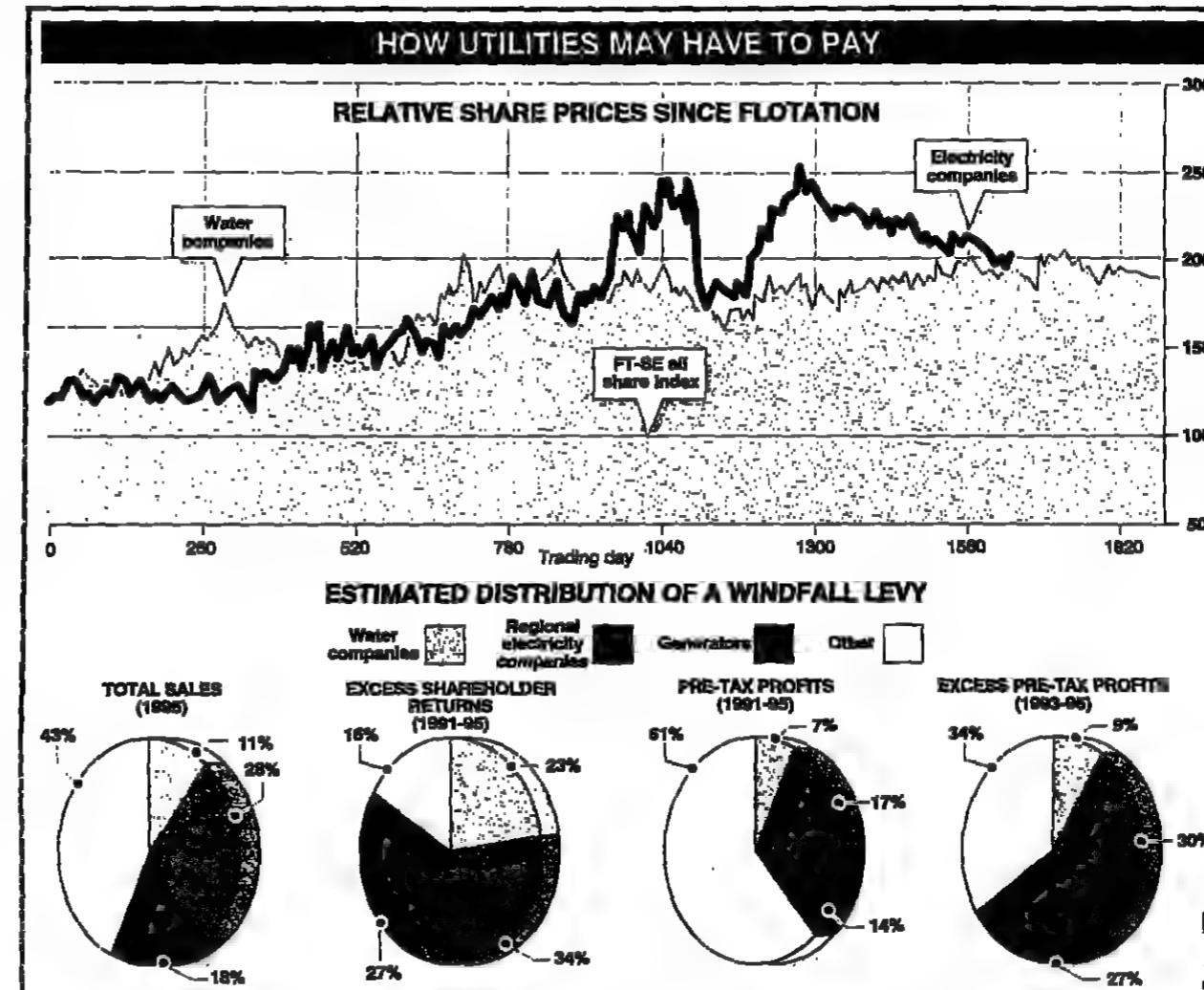
While a legal challenge is not out of the question, the majority of companies are certain to think seriously about the implications of such action. This, as the Institute of Fiscal Studies pointed out yesterday, is ostensibly a politically palatable tax with less sound economic foundations. Any challenge, perhaps by utilities with US owners, would risk the wrath of a new government that could impose far harsher regulation than presently being considered. There is more appetite in the boardrooms for instant pain through the windfall tax than longer-term suffering through tougher regulation. As Labour has declared the tax to be a one-off, the companies should then be able to shape investment and operations without too much uncertainty.

The rationale for the tax is that assets were sold too cheaply by the Government and utilities have enjoyed excessive profits through monopoly positions. Favourable regulation has helped, as have cost efficiencies which have proved much greater than first imagined.

But the experience of companies and industries varies. Herein lies the challenge of drafting a tax to apply across a broad range of utilities, however they may be categorised, and any other privatised companies to be affected.

Mr Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, has refused to be drawn on the definition of a utility. Generally a public utility is taken to mean a service provided for public use such as power, water, transport and telecommunications. Indications are that the net may be cast wide. It could include BT, British Airways, British Airports Authority and a number of other companies who would argue strongly that they operate in internationally competitive environments and therefore should be immune from the tax.

The wider the remit, the less the burden on individual companies. But the wider the remit, the more difficult the case would seem to be against individual companies. The



widest remit could encompass all privatised businesses sold by the Government for less than they have proved worth – ie, all privatised businesses. But those operating in a vigorously competitive arena, such as telecoms, will argue that their circumstances are not comparable with electricity and water companies, which enjoy regional monopolies.

One possible definition is all businesses that are regulated. This would include many companies that have given shareholders bumper benefits at the expense of consumers. Mr Brown has pointed to the tax covering companies privatised since 1979 that are licensed and subject to regulation. A levy on regulated companies would bring in BT, but would exclude the large electricity generators.

which operate in a competitive environment, however widely criticised that area is, and are not regulated. But the exclusion of National Power and PowerGen from a windfall tax, when each has returned £1 billion to shareholders, would not seem equitable.

A tax based almost exclusively on sales lacks sophistication and would take no account of the excess profits that Labour is keen to penalise. A share price evaluation may grasp more of the outperformance of utilities but while their share prices have leapt ahead of comparable companies, a calculation of a tax on share price would be unique and of questionable merit. It would also be a victim of its own effect because the share price of utilities now factor in the impact of a windfall tax and are therefore lower than they might otherwise have been. The levy is

more likely to be linked to profits. Again this is open to considerable interpretation. It would be anomalous to fix the levy in accordance with corporation tax paid because the water companies have paid much less corporation tax than other utilities or privatised businesses. Rather, Labour must seek to determine some measure of excess profits above what might be reasonable. This is where benchmarking will compare other large companies and regulated industries overseas.

Labour will have compared the performance of the British utilities with those in Europe and the United States. Apart from its own calculations the party will draw on a range of studies pitching the performance of the privatised utilities

in terms of profits and share price against other large companies. Recent research for the Trade and Industry Select Committee investigation into energy regulation by the Centre for Regulated Industries provided benchmark comparisons showing outperformance by the utility companies. Other studies, such as one presented to the Royal Economic Society last month on the performance of the regional electricity companies have described profits as "abnormally high".

The decision on which companies to hit will come from the Treasury with little input likely from other departments. So far, amid internal conflict over the tax, Mr Brown has resisted attempts by some divisions of the party to help to shape implementation of the levy. A plan to involve the utilities in regional development through the tax sculpted by Richard Caborn and backed by John Prescott was squashed by Mr Brown. It is possible that such a devolved programme for the levy will resurface with supporters arguing that the utilities, as large employers, would be useful if they were involved in programmes of regional regeneration. They would fund local jobs with their own contributions to the windfall tax with possible incentives to create employment offered through investment partnerships with government.

Labour's trade and industry department is thought to have had little involvement in consultations over the tax. Kim Howells, a frontbench spokesman on trade and industry, last year caused controversy when he indicated that the tax could damage the competitiveness of companies that pay it.

Such arguments, which are bound to be reinforced by the industry, could influence a Labour chancellor to spread the tax more thinly among more companies. One thing that is certain about the tax is that it will be imposed quickly – as soon as the first Budget allows – so that the job creation exercise that it is intended to fund may begin. By June, if the government changes, all should be clear.

Fading fame of a management 'guru'


Tom Peters, whose reputation is called into question in a new biography

The ideas that companies should be close to their customers and should stick to the business they are good at are so central to the basic managerial tool kit today that they appear trite. It is hard to remember it is only in the last 15 years that they have become so widely accepted.

Staying close to customers and sticking to the knitting were two of eight managerial principles laid down by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman in their 1982 book, *In Search of Excellence*. The book has gone on to sell nearly 6 million copies.

Its success turned Peters from McKinsey consultant into the world's first management "guru". His weekly column ran for ten years and was syndicated to 110 newspapers, even reaching India and Korea. He can charge \$95,000 a day for his seminars (\$65,000 in the US), and gives 75 a year.

Yet, as Stuart Crainer's biography shows, Peters' research methods are questionable and his "thinking" has become increasingly incoherent. Casting himself as a rebel, Peters has turned to gurus to make an impact. On the cover of one recent book (subtitled "Crazy Times call for Crazy Organizations"), Peters is pictured wearing orange shorts. One of his columns fatuously claimed that "a man with a tie is mentally constipated".

Why, then, was it such a success? The answer, as Peters has acknowledged, is down to luck and impeccable timing. The book appeared when the US economy was in the depths of recession. Yet instead of trumpeting the triumphs of Japanese management, as was then the vogue, Peters

and Waterman celebrated the success of "excellent" American corporations. Nemesis came swiftly. Peters' excellent companies – including Hewlett-Packard, Disney and Digital Equipment – were soon in trouble, and one of them, IBM, went on to suffer some of the worst losses in corporate history. Peters admits: "In Search of Excellence" was narrow in perspective, often strikingly banal in its insights: contradictory in its selection process; nationalistic; and written by two unknown management consultants.

Despite the serious flaws of 1987's *Thriving on Chaos* ("true to its title", says Crainer) and 1992's *Liberation Management* ("gushingly anecdotal and largely unreadable"), Peters retained his sense of timing and his antennae for the spirit of the age. He

can take credit for helping to focus managers' minds on the need for continuous change and improvement. Peters is best regarded as a populariser, catalyst and motivator.

Gloatingly for those who enjoy their prejudices, Peters is better at telling people how to run their businesses than at managing his own. His attempts to build a consultancy business on the back of his success have failed. Crainer says: "Peters' company falls short of the customer service standards that he demands of others – even failing to return telephone calls."

Peters' career, divided into bite-size sections and leavened with dry wit. After quoting Peters' bizarre analogy between his writing career and anal-retentiveness, Crainer says of the "complete loosening" that produced *Liberation Management*: "Peters' anal metaphor is open to misinterpretation."

Crainer steers clear of Peters' personal life, his four wives and his time in therapy. Perhaps for this reason, a feeling for Peters' charisma and forceful personality remains elusive. Still, the book is well worth reading before going to see Peters on his next visit to London – and much better value, too.

□ *Corporate Man to Corporate Skunk: The Tom Peters Phenomenon*, by Stuart Crainer; Capstone, £18.99, is published on April 18.

PAUL DURMAN

ENGELS-HOLLANDSE BELEGGINGS TRUST NV.

(English and Dutch Investment Trust)
Established in Amsterdam

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders will be held on Thursday 24 April 1997 at 10.00 hours at the Le Meridien Apollo Hotel, Apollolaan 2, Amsterdam.

Shareholders wishing to attend the General Meeting of the Company must deposit their shares not less than seven days before the Meeting with Staal Bankiers N.V., Lange Houtstraat 8, 2501 CH Den Haag or with Royal Exchange Assurance, 155 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3TG. A deposit certificate will be issued to such shareholders which, upon surrender, will entitle them to vote at the Meeting.

Holdings of shares registered with the Company in its Shareholders' Register must inform the Board of Managing Directors in writing at least four days prior to the Meeting that they intend to attend the Meeting in person or by proxy.

Holders of Participation Certificates issued by Royal Exchange Assurance who wish to attend and vote at the Meeting must contact the Trustee Department of Royal Exchange Assurance, 155 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3TG at least ten days before the Meeting.

Royal Exchange Assurance is prepared to issue a power of attorney for the same number of shares held in trust as the Certificateholders shall have deposited with Royal Exchange Assurance.

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1996 and of the Resolutions to be put before the Meeting will be available at the offices of the company.

At the meeting a proposal of the meeting of holders of priority shares will be put forward, to approve an amendment of the company's articles of association (i.e. an increase of the company's authorized share capital). A copy of the proposal including the verbatim text of the proposed amendment is deposited until the end of the meeting at the offices of the company for inspection by the shareholders and holders of depositary receipts and is available free of charge to shareholders and holders of depositary receipts.

Board of Management
Engels-Hollandse Beleggings Trust N.V.
Rust en Vreugdlaan 2
Wassenaar, 10 April 1997

Office address:
Rust en Vreugdlaan 2
2243 AS Wassenaar

MORAG PRESTON

Australia lifts bank takeover controls

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE
IN SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA is to remove restrictions that prevent foreign companies from taking over domestic banks, it was announced yesterday.

Delivering the Government's response to the seven-month inquiry into the sector, known as the Wallis report, Peter Costello, the Treasurer, said: "The Government has decided to remove the former government's blanket prohibition on a foreign takeover of any of the major banks."

The "six pillars" policy had prevented mergers between Australia's big four banks — ANZ, Westpac, National Australia Bank and Commonwealth Bank — and the two largest pension and life insurance groups, Australian Mutual Provident Society and National Mutual.

Banking analysts said yesterday that the move was good news for Lloyds TSB, HSBC Holdings, ABN Amro and JNC, the Dutch banks, which are all believed to be keen to expand their presence in Australia.

However, Mr Costello said that the Government would retain the power of veto over any foreign bank takeover, saying that any large-scale transfer of ownership into foreign hands would be contrary to the national interest.

The Government also scuppered hopes of a consolidation of the Australian banking sector by prohibiting mergers between the four biggest banks until there was more competition within the industry.

Shares of ANZ and Westpac, which had been seen as bid targets from National Australia Bank, fell, while shares in National Australia Bank and the Commonwealth Bank both rose.

Analysts believe that the Government will now approve Westpac's recently proposed A\$1.4 billion (£674 million) takeover of the Bank of Melbourne, a regional bank.



Lawrence Ward, left, who has been appointed chief executive of Martin International, with Samuel Ling yesterday

Procter & Gamble to pay \$1.8bn for world-leading Tambrands

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

PROCTER & GAMBLE, the hygiene and household goods group, is making its largest purchase having agreed to buy Tambrands, maker of Tampax tampons, for \$1.8 billion.

P&G is paying \$50 a share for the company. Its only product is Tampax which it began marketing in the 1930s. It is still the world leader with 40 per cent of the tampon market.

P&G said it planned to expand the business with broader retail marketing, particularly in areas of the world where it currently sells in small amounts but which have the largest growth potential.

About 90 per cent of Tambrands' sales are in Europe and North America, although Tampax is marketed in more than 150 countries. P&G al-

ready has market-leading sanitary pads and other feminine protection products.

Controversy already surrounds the deal with allegations of insider trading circulating in some quarters. The New York Stock Exchange has contacted Tambrands about a surge in trading in its shares over the past few days. P&G tried to keep the talks

secret, but rumours of an imminent takeover of Tambrands swept the market last week. Trading in the company's options has been unusually heavy on the Chicago Board Options Exchange in the past few days. Trading was also intense on the New York Stock Exchange where Tambrands shares rose \$3 to more than \$46 since last week. The surge

means that the \$30 purchase price represents only a small premium to the current value of the shares. The \$1.8 billion purchase price is 14 times operating income. Analysts regard this as a respectable rating. Tambrands' shares have fallen 30 per cent since 1993 amid the bull market for stocks in general.

Recently the company has been restructured, closing four of its nine factories, cutting 17 per cent of its workforce and taking a \$45 million charge to cover the changes.

The purchase will establish P&G as the market leader in feminine protection products. It also shuts out rivals such as Kimberly Clark which was believed to be interested in buying Tambrands. P&G withdrew from the tampon market in 1980 when its Rely brand was associated with toxic shock syndrome. It is the first significant purchase by P&G since 1995.

Ionica plans 600 service centre jobs

BY ERIC REGULY

IONICA, the wireless telephony company, is to create 600 jobs at a new service centre in Birmingham. The site will help to support the planned roll-out of commercial operations across the country.

The centre is to open in the summer and will provide marketing and billing services.

Ionica has another service site in Cambridge, employing 700. Announcement of the Birmingham centre comes a month after Ionica raised £215 million in debt and private equity to finance expansion.

The City expects Ionica, whose shareholders include Yorkshire Electricity, Northern

Electric and Morgan Stanley, the US investment bank, to float later this year. The original business plan envisaged flotation by the end of 1995, but commercial operations began later than expected.

Ionica said that it plans to cover 80 per cent of homes in the UK, excluding Scotland, by 2002. Service began in eastern England, where more than 14,000 customers have signed up, last June.

□ Telecom Plus, a specialist provider of telecoms services, said it is to join Ofex the unregulated securities market, through the sale of 2 million shares at 50p each.

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ACCOUNTANCY

SA prompts more questions

Self-assessment gives rise to certain taxing concerns, says David Brodie

ON Monday the Inland Revenue started posting eight million new-style self-assessment (SA) tax returns. Tax specialists eagerly await answers to four compelling questions. Is the Revenue capable of administering SA? Will more people turn to professional advisers? Will we witness a mushrooming of "tax shops"? And, how will the Revenue exercise its extensive new audit powers?

The first thing to strike taxpayers will be the look of their tax returns. Instead of a drab form in a brown envelope, it comes in a blue plastic polywrap. It has bold colour-coding for postposting, and a separate guide and booklet explaining the tax calculation.

It is misleading to talk about the tax return. There are 23 versions for different taxpayers' situations. Each has the same initial eight pages requesting common details such as bank and building society interest, payments to pension schemes and other tax reliefs. There may then be extra pages tailored to particular circumstances, to report income from employment, self-employment, rent received from property, capital gains and so on.

Instead of large white spaces for detailed narrative entries, the SA return prefers little boxes which can take only a

number, a tick or a few words. It is a computer input document, to be used by the Revenue to work out your tax. It is no longer sufficient to report your salary as "per PAYE" — a figure must be entered.

You have until January 31 next year to submit the form, although anyone wanting the taxman to compute their outstanding tax — or refund — should file by September 30. This still leaves time to accumulate the necessary information. All employers should provide employees with details of salaries and benefits in kind, on forms P60 and P11D, by May 31 and July 6 respectively. And banks and building societies must provide certificates of interest credited on deposits on receipt of your request.

The Revenue acknowledges that SA has been a massive organisational exercise, and many professionals question its outward confidence that all the pieces are falling safely into place. For example, there have been many reports of conflicting advice being offered by tax districts and head office.

The Revenue also acknowledges that it will not be able to cope if most taxpayers choose to file next January, and so it is encouraging early submission of SA returns. Hence the recent publicity that the taxman will do the calculation for you if you



David Brodie highlights fears about random audits

meet the September 30 deadline. In fact the Revenue will complete the calculation for later filers too, although there may be interest penalties.

The proportion of taxpayers seeking professional advice rose to 72 per cent from 20 per cent when SA was introduced in Australia in 1980. Until now, about half of those completing UK tax returns have sought professional help. The Revenue says SA need not drive anyone into the arms of an adviser.

It emphasises the user-friendliness of the return, the help available from tax offices and a new out-of-hours helpline. These may be insufficient once taxpayers realise the tough new penalties for incorrect returns, and that tax offices will not help with tax planning.

Hence the growth in "tax shops" now advertising cut-price no-frills help with SA returns. But let the buyer beware! Anyone may offer tax advice in the UK. There is no guarantee of the quality of service such organisations will provide. In 1995 TaxAid published a damning report chronicling the dangers of incompetence, negligence and even dishonesty in this unregulated marketplace. It is quite possible that some of the new tax shops may prune costs by employing untrained staff.

Whatever government is in power after May 1, it will be strapped for cash. SA introduces a power of random audit, and experts fear that taxmen will become tougher in conducting audits, spurred on by Treasury demands for extra tax. The recent jailing of Michael Allcock, the former Inspector, and a review of a few overzealous investigators who have broken the traditional ground rules, have done little to instil confidence that tax investigations will continue to be carried out in a "gentlemanly" way.

David Brodie is Director of TaxAid, a charity that provides free advice on tax matters to individuals in financial need.

bodies, was a disaster. So it is good to report that its competitor at the time, TEN, the television education network, is going from strength to strength.

This week its Accountants' Channel celebrates its 400th programme — while its relaunched Finance Channel is poised to gain accreditation for CPE, continuing professional education, from CLIMA, the management accounting

bodies.

ROBERT BRUCE

Supplier to M&S plans China move

BY CHRIS AYRES

SAMUEL LING, a director and major investor in Martin International, which makes underwear and leisurewear for Marks & Spencer, is investing \$4 million of his own money in the group to develop a new factory in China.

The factory will supply women's underwear to M&S stores in the Far East. Mr Ling, who owns nearly 10 per cent of the company, will subscribe for redeemable preference shares with detachable warrants, giving him the right to subscribe for ordinary shares.

Mr Ling's investment coincides with a significant turnaround in Martin International's fortunes. Yesterday the group reported pre-tax profits of £1.25 million for the year to December 31, compared with a loss of £1.77 million in the preceding year.

Sales were up 23 per cent, from £90.2 million to £111 million, and earnings per share were 2.2p against losses of 6.1p. An unchanged final dividend of 0.65p, due on July 1, maintains the total at 1.1p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Aer Lingus operating profits increase 4%

AER LINGUS, the Republic of Ireland's state-owned airline, which was on the edge of bankruptcy in 1993, yesterday reported a 4 per cent increase in operating profits to £42 million for 1996. Pre-tax profits jumped 130 per cent to £41 million after a sharp cut in interest charges from more than £20 million. £1 million and an exceptional contribution of £4 million. Turnover was up 9 per cent to £766 million.

In 1995 Aer Lingus received £50 million as the last tranche of a £175 million rescue package agreed with the Irish Government in 1993 to help it out of its financial crisis. Since then it has carried out an overhaul of its activities, which included 1,350 job losses. Bernie Cahill, group chairman, warned that despite the better than expected results, the company would continue to seek further cost reductions. He added that the improved financial position enhanced the prospects of finding a partner for a strategic alliance.

Disposal hits Lamont

A LOSS on the disposal of Shaw's Carpets sent Lamont Holdings, the Northern Ireland textiles group, £5.6 million into the red last year. A year earlier the company made a pre-tax profit of £9.7 million. The Shaw's sale led to a loss of £8.1 million in the year to December 31, and elimination of £3.5 million of goodwill. Loss per share was 20.6p (22.5p earnings). The final dividend, maintained at 9.15p, is payable on June 13, making a constant full-year 12.8p.

Abbot aims overseas

ABBOT GROUP, the fast-growing oil services company, is planning a sharp overseas expansion which it hopes will more than double its revenues from overseas oilfields. The company hopes to complete the business shift without any more acquisitions. The enlarged group earned pre-tax profits of £7.45 million in 1996. Earnings were 4.6p a share (3.5p loss) and a final dividend of 1.25p lifts the total to 1.92p (1.68p). The shares rose 4p to 134p.

Caverdale higher

CAVERDALE, the motor retailing, industrial products and motorcycle accessories group, yesterday reported a 28 per cent rise in pre-tax profits from £4.2 million to £5.4 million for the year ended December 31. The results were helped by strong performances from the motor retailing and industrial products divisions. Overall sales were up 31 per cent, from £187.5 million to £245.8 million. A final dividend of 2p (1.8p) will be paid on July 1, making the total 3.0p (3p).

Cirqual pays interim

CIRQUAL, the specialist engineering company that joined the Alternative Investment Market last summer, yesterday reported a rise in interim pre-tax profits to £2.78 million (£1.34 million) for the six months to February 28. Turnover was also up, from £9.19 million to £13.47 million, and earnings per share increased from 5.44p to 8.26p. An interim dividend of 3.27p (nil) will be paid on May 28. The company intends to pay a matching final dividend. The shares rose 9p to 250p.

Chesterfield sale

CHESTERFIELD PROPERTIES has sold a 600,000 sq ft property portfolio, comprising five industrial estates, for a total of £18.92 million, taking total property sales over the past six months to £16.2 million. The sale price reflects an initial net yield of 11.6 per cent, said the group. Most of the portfolio, in Hereford, Egham, Norwich and Newcastle, generating £2.1 million a year in rental income, has been acquired by the Mars Pension Trustees for £17.45 million.

Smokescreen tactics

NOW that self-assessment has been properly launched upon us, a new controversy has arisen among the ranks of tax advisers. They are worried about the likelihood of local tax offices using their new-found powers to launch a tax investigation without having to give any reasons to have a quick go at "curiosity cases", where they have often wondered about the tax affairs of

someone but have never had enough of a reason to investigate.

One of the ways to limit such a trawl is to file the papers as late as possible. The possibility of an enormous quantity of tax returns being filed on January 30 next year, in the hope, as one adviser said, that they will get past in the smokescreen, may prove too tempting.

Silent partners

THERE were large numbers of people pretending to be journalists at last week's press launch of the new self-assessment tax forms. In fact most of the large accountancy firms had sent along senior people to observe.

Price Waterhouse even had the firm's head of tax there, and Ernst & Young was repre-

sented alongside a solid contingent of experts from KPMG. But the presence of being journalists had a downside. They were barred by the Inland Revenue from asking any questions.

Good reception

ACCOUNTANCY Television, the short-lived training system funded by the accountancy

bodies, was a disaster. So it is good to report that its competitor at the time, TEN, the television education network, is going from strength to strength.

This week its Accountants' Channel celebrates its 400th programme — while its relaunched Finance Channel is poised to gain accreditation for CPE, continuing professional education, from CLIMA, the management accounting

bodies.

ROBERT BRUCE

of dealing with a random audit are incurred by the taxpayer and that they are not deductible.

The realisation that after the 7,500 random inquiries into taxpayers' affairs there will be equally numerous trawling expeditions into specific taxpayers' affairs, what one tax adviser refers to as "the curiosity cases", will not go down well. And we will all await the tabloid coverage of unfortunate and blameless elderly pensioners being asked by the Revenue to sort out their bank statements and look lively about it.

All this was predictable. But the Revenue, keen on logic, rather than human behaviour, has taken a long time to understand. Tax advisers, in a year's time, may have the last laugh.



ROBERT BRUCE



■ FILM 1

With *The People vs. Larry Flynt* Milos Forman returns to something like his old irreverent self



■ FILM 2

Nihilism runs riot in Swansea, or at least it does in the loulish Swansea of *Twin Town*



■ FILM 3

After the lucrative return of *Star Wars*, the (slightly) enhanced *Empire Strikes Back* hits the screens again



■ FILM 4

Half Nelson? Is the new documentary film of Nelson Mandela's life too reverential?

CINEMA: Geoff Brown finds himself rooting for the bad guy in Milos Forman's ebullient *The People vs. Larry Flynt*

For a good time, call on the scumbag

After being shot by a sniper outside a Georgia courthouse, an event that puts him in a wheelchair, millionaire pornographer Larry Flynt says: "I've got to move somewhere where perverts are welcome." We cut immediately to his next port of call, Hollywood.

The joke is amusing, yet it also alerts us to the unusual status of *The People vs. Larry Flynt* in mainstream American cinema. Milos Forman's rollercoaster ride through the life of the brazen publisher of *Hustler* magazine takes place mostly between 1972 and 1984, years when conservative forces increasingly stifled the iconoclastic spirit bequeathed by the 1960s.

Today's Hollywood, by and large, is even more conformist than the Hollywood Flynt knew. It loves formulae: it loves to play safe. But here is Woody Harrelson, Flynt's impersonator, wearing the American flag as a napkin, flinging oranges at a judge and arguing all the way to the Supreme Court the right to suggest for satirical purposes that the Rev Jerry Falwell, high priest of the religious right, had sex with his own mother.

We expect confrontation from Oliver Stone, the film's co-producer. We expect eccentricities from scriptwriters Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski: they gave us *Ed Wood*. But we have forgotten to expect anything outlandish from Forman. True, he sanitised Czech society in the 1960s and championed the American outsider in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. But since the 1980s Forman has either been lost to lavish period dramas or marooned on unfulfilled projects: this is his first film since *Voltaire* in 1989. While a few notches below his very best work, *Larry Flynt* reminds us vividly of his humane and irreverent spirit, grasp of comic detail and knack for assembling an

The People vs. Larry Flynt
Warner West End
18, 130 mins
Bracing portrait of the American pornographer

Twin Town
Warner West End
18, 99 mins
Rough and nasty comedy drama set in Swansea

The Empire Strikes Back
Odeon Leicester Square
U, 126 mins
... but doesn't deliver a knockout punch

Bits and Pieces
Everyman, 15, 110 mins
Absorbing tapestry of Italian life

Total Eclipse
ABC Piccadilly
18, 106 mins
Unequivocal drama about Rimbaud and Verlaine

off-beat cast blending the professional and amateur.

Some of Forman's "discoveries" will pass over British heads. Who will spot Donna Hanover, a breakfast television reporter, as the evangelist sister of Jimmy Carter, who triggers Flynt's brief conversion to Christianity? We do better with James Carville, the "ragin' Cajun" of Clinton's 1992 election campaign, cast as an anti-porn crusader.

We do better still with rock singer Courtney Love, raw and dangerous as Flynt's devoted wife Althea, ultimately ravaged by drug addiction and Aids. Hers is a startling performance. It's hard not to be riveted, too, by Edward Norton as Alan Isaacman, the civil rights lawyer who in the script, if not in life, fights all Flynt's battles. And Harrelson puts on a great show as the porn merchant who rightly labels himself a scumbag, yet still earns our admiration for his honesty and fighting spirit.

Then, after a ragged comic half-hour, characters stop banging around the screen like pinballs and generate a tit-for-tat plot. The father of two tearaway brothers falls from a roof while working. The contractor (William Thomas) offers no compensation. The brothers (Rhys Ifans and Llyr Evans, real-life siblings) declare open warfare. A cherished poodle is decapitated. People are urinated upon, trussed up in their garage, set on fire. The malice and cruelty become overwhelming.

The film would be easier to bear if Kevin Allen, a television actor with some football documentaries to his credit, displayed a firm hand as a director. But he shoves his images on to the screen with the same reckless force by which his characters live. He can inspire vigorous performances and concoct vivid moments: take the roadside collision between the twins and a marching band in national dress. But he cannot move the film forward from one scene to the next, or secure even passing sympathy for the drug-dealers, bent coppers and fools who populate this Swansea. Two-fingered gestures are fine in cinema if real rage behind them: *Twin Town* is only being nihilistic and nasty because it is fashionable. "Set your weapons for stun." Darth Vader orders his minions in *The Empire Strikes Back*, like its predecessor, *Star Wars*, back on screen in a new edition. George Lucas and his director Irvin Kershner must have given their troops the same command when the film moved into active production in 1979. Compared to *Star Wars* there is more of everything: hurtling

space ships, laser beam battles, fantastic creatures, even human characterisation. "Improvements" to the new print include digital treatment of the opening snow battle, and an enlarged cityscape for the floating HQ of Billy Dee Williams's shifty Lando Calrissian.

Are we stunned? Not really,

least of all by Yoda, the tiresome creature who furthers Luke Skywalker's understanding of the Force. But

fans of the original will flock to see how time has treated Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher and company. The rest of us can shuffle off to the ABC Panton Street, London, where a genuine cinema masterpiece, *Orson Welles's Citizen Kane*, is back on view.

Considering that some people are hammered to death and shot by a contract killer, the absorbing Italian film *Bits and Pieces* is remarkably sanguine about the cruelties of life. One reason, perhaps, is that nothing is dwelt upon: here is a film with more than 60 characters and some 30 miniature stories, woven together in a tapestry depicting one day in Rome from dawn to dusk.

This is the second feature of director Antonello Grimaldi, and he composes his city symphony with an affection shadowed by unease about urban pressures. He admits to the influence of Robert Altman, but the Altman of *Nashville* rather than *Short Cuts*. The film's cumulative

power derives in part from Grimaldi's use of trivial incidents; here are bruising encounters with shopkeepers and traffic wardens, casual revelations of deception and infidelity.

A few well-known faces dot

the cast — Enrico Lo Verso, as a romantically inclined postman, will be the most familiar. But everyone blends in seamlessly in Rome's streets, offices and bars that much time is spent at home. This is a rumitative, small-scale epic, a film to seek out and savour.

Bad behaviour is not the preserve only of Kevin Allen's Swansea. French 19th-century poets could be brutes too. Look at *Total Eclipse*, where Leonardo DiCaprio's Rimbaud spends far more time beching

ing, spitting and stabbing Verlaine's hand than writing, while Verlaine himself (David Thewlis) enjoys kicking his pregnant wife.

The film, shot largely in France early in 1995, is a belated adaptation of Christopher Hampton's play, written when he was 18. He does not bring mature wisdom to revisiting his text; there is no suggestion that human flaws acknowledged, these two are great poets. Neither Agnieszka Holland's direction nor the cast help Holland's close-ups to seek out and savour.

Bad behaviour is not the preserve only of Kevin Allen's Swansea. French 19th-century poets could be brutes too. Look at *Total Eclipse*, where Leonardo DiCaprio's Rimbaud spends far more time beching

The making of Mandela

Nigel Williamson meets the man who filmed South Africa's president

For some reason the world's leading movie-makers have shied away from one of the most powerful sagas of the 20th century. The Nelson Mandela story is the very stuff from which instant legends — and epic movies — are made. Yet only now, seven years after he was freed from prison and three years after he was elected president, has Mandela become the subject of a full-length, big-screen, Oscar-nominated biopic.

The film director Jo Menell first suggested the picture to the ANC leader in 1993. For 20 years a hot-shot television correspondent, Menell had returned to his native South Africa following the lifting of a 20-year ban, and met Mandela at a family celebration.

"He is a very good friend of my brother Clive, who still lives there, and he came to my niece's wedding. I asked him how his autobiography was going, then I asked him who was making the film. 'No one,' said Mandela. 'I told him there and then that I wanted to make it. He said OK.'

What Menell had in mind was not some glossy Hollywood blockbuster starring Morgan Freeman or Denzel Washington, but a warts-and-all documentary based on unlimited fly-on-the-wall access in the run-up to the democratic elections of 1994. Mandela agreed without restriction, and also wrote to friends, family and colleagues asking them to co-operate.

"We agreed that Mandela would have the right to correct any factual errors but that was all," Menell says. "He told me to go out and look for criticism, he urged me to ask the difficult questions."

Some will say that in this last respect Menell has failed, but the director claims it was virtually impossible to find anyone prepared to criticise. There are no scenes in which Mandela loses his temper, behaves unreasonably or treats people badly — because

says Menell, in seven months of constant filming, such moments simply never occurred.

The only discernible flaw concerns his children. "He was a terrible father, never there for his kids, always putting politics first." The film deals unsentimentally with the way Mandela cast aside his first wife, Evelyn, and the subsequent marriage to and separation from Winnie, who is interviewed at length. "I am glad she comes across sympathetically because she went through a lot. I thought Mandela might ask us to remove his love letters from prison which she made available, but he kept to our agreement."

If Menell's film is not a critical portrait it is certainly a candid and intimate one. Mandela is seen making his own bed (a habit he has apparently been unable to break from prison days) and arguing with his aides over changing a shirt he has worn for two days ("people only took at my face").

Very rarely Mandela allows himself to become emotional; there can have been few more moving scenes on celluloid than Mandela's return to Robben Island. "I took him back for the first time and he looked around his old cell and said, 'Much smaller than I imagined.' Then he talked of his mother's last visit and how he knew he wouldn't see her again because she was very ill. I couldn't ask any other questions after that. He stood there in silence and we let the camera run."

The most revealing contrast

between the private man and the public figurehead came

'A tour de force'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

□ **THE PEOPLE VS. LARRY FLYNT**

George Lamb, 18: The most snappy and acidic film I've seen about a porn-again Christian.

Tim Thornton, 21: A tour de force from Milos Forman. A terrific cast; touching and hilarious throughout.

Damian Samuels, 19: Well-acted and highly entertaining film which deserved more notice at this year's Academy Awards.

Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 18: A moving and important film. Courtney Love's performance was appropriate.

□ **TWIN TOWN**

George: A downbeat *Train-spott* without the edge.

Tim: A gripping romp, although in some places the violent thrills and the comedy

did not blend as well as they might have.

Damian: *Shallow Grave* meets *Funny Bones* meets *the Engine* in this brilliant black comedy.

Leslie: Will do for Wales what drugs and porn have done for Holland.

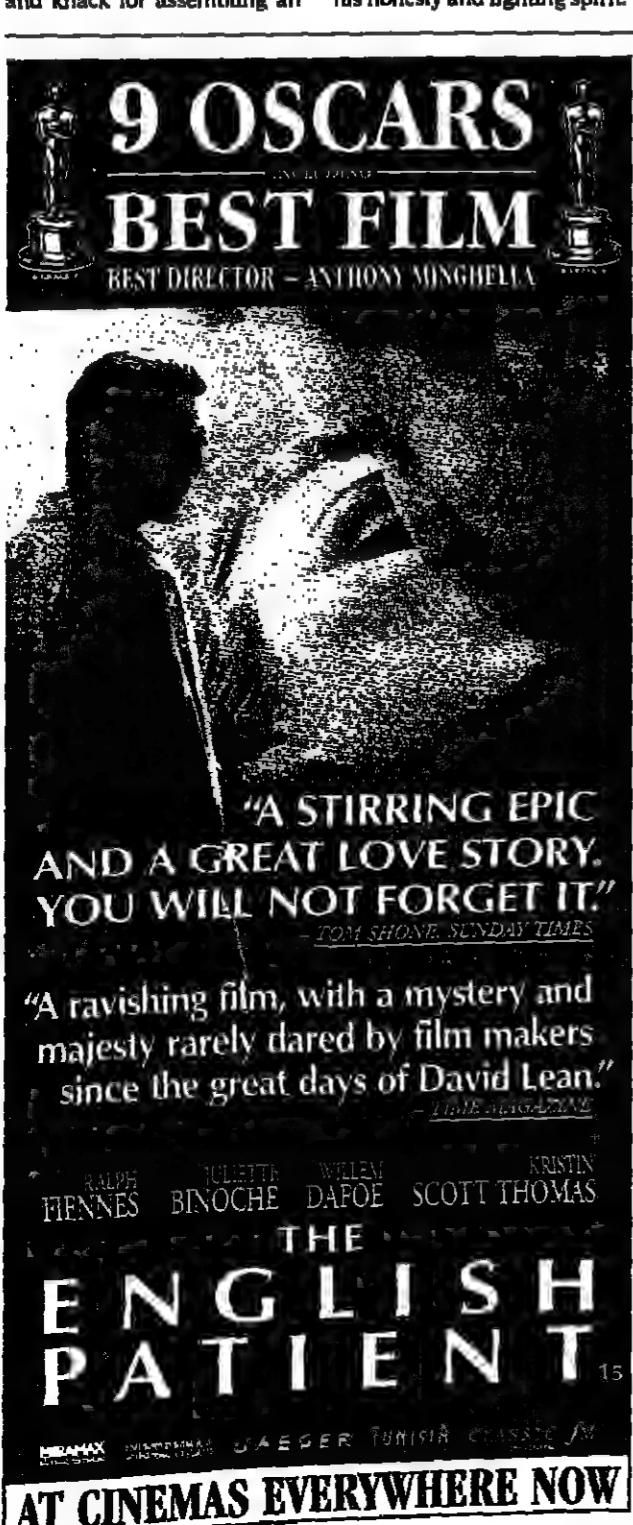
□ **THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK**

George: Once again George Lucas delivers the goods. The second of the Big Three will no doubt double its cult following.

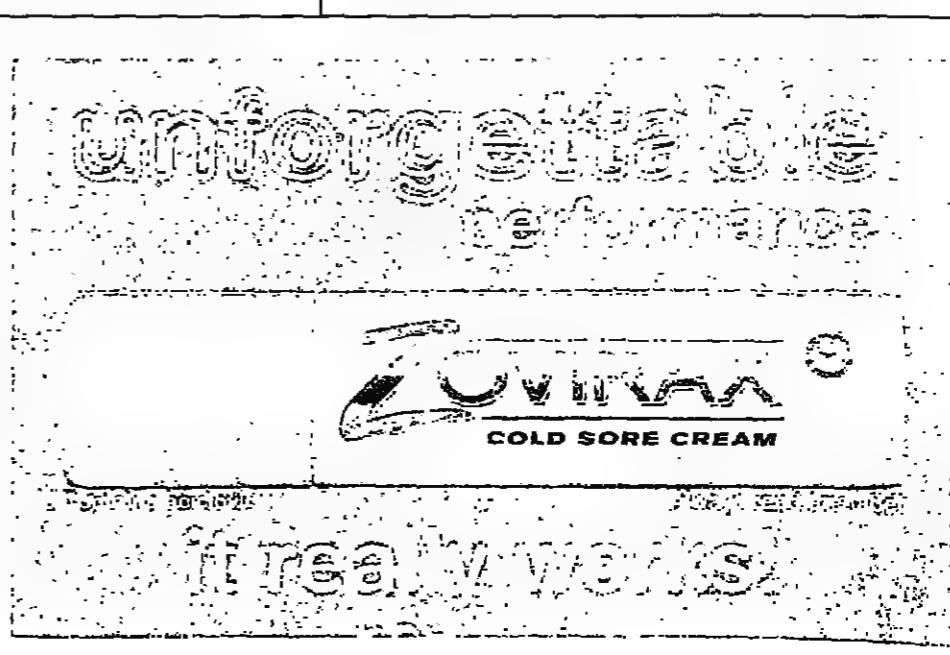
Tim: A non-stop action-packed rollercoaster. If you see one out of the three *Star Wars* films make it this one.

Damian: Unlike the *Police Academy* series, this proves that sequels can be equals.

Leslie: Striking stuff.



Jo Menell (rear) with his co-director Anguus Gibson and Nelson Mandela during the seven months of filming





THEATRE

Siân Phillips is magnificent, but la Dietrich is poorly served by the tepid *Marlene*



POP 1

Cast show their limitations and superficiality in Dublin at the start of their big tour



THE TIMES ARTS



POP 2

... but Marianne Faithfull is hypnotic as she evokes Weimar Germany in her new show



MUSIC

Sliding to fame: Christian Lindberg, virtuoso trombonist, has reshaped his own instrument

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale sees *Marlene* fall flat on its transfer to the West End



Siân Phillips, "her tall, tapering figure encased in that glittering sheath" gives her considerable all as *Marlene*. Dietrich. The legend herself is not nearly as forthcoming, and the likes of Lou Gish (right) are mere ciphers in Pam Gems's play

Blowing his own patent

MUSIC: Hilary Finch meets the trombonist who has invented an instrument to meet his needs



Christian Lindberg: have trombone, will experiment

The fax machine was the only part of the rambling apartment high on Stockholm's Valhallavägen over which my prying eyes were forbidden to wander. I could pan over the piles of laundry for four children, the wallpaper-jigsaw of their paintings, the old Swedish tiled stove. But this machine was out of bounds. It had just yielded the formula for a revolutionary type of trombone valve: the definitive Christian Lindberg model is about to be patented.

The instrument itself has never quite recovered from Lindberg's assault on it when he was 17. From a school Dixieland band, Lindberg descended into the Stockholm Opera pit — orchestras were where trombones lived in those days. After a year he climbed out and decided he would either have to quit music altogether, or go his own way. He packed his trombone, studied in London and Los Angeles, then came home and won the Nordic Soloists' Biennale.

Lindberg was snapped up by the BIS record company, and a worldwide search for repertoire for the trombone began. He found and published lost concertos for

zarr's father and by Michael Haydn. Within 15 years, too, more than 50 new works had been composed specially for Lindberg.

Of course, a brave and ever-expanding new world of brass virtuosos needed not only new composers but new, more flexible instruments too — which is where the secret-formula valve comes in. Lindberg has already experimented with different metals and a new mouthpiece; now the complicated maze of plumbing, invented in the 1830s to help with low notes, is being replaced by a single, curving valve, manipulated into gear-change by one speedy thumb-click.

"The fewer the bends, the straighter the instrument, the clearer the sound," Lindberg explains. "It's as simple as that. What I have done is to try

to restore the unique, divine voice of the pre-valve trombone, while retaining the flexibility of the valve."

The new Christian Lindberg trombone, set to be the Rolls-Royce of the instrument, will be tried out at the weekend in Birmingham's two-week Sounds of Sweden festival. Tomorrow's world premiere of a piece commissioned by Iannis Xenakis in his 75th birthday year, for Lindberg and the eight marimbas of the Swedish percussion ensemble Kroumata, will be followed on Sunday by another festival premiere, Jan Sandström's *Cantos de la Mancha*.

Sandström, Lindberg's closest collaborator, is the man who changed the trombone into a Harley-Davidson in the *Motorbike Concerto* of 1989, a musical experience once heard — and seen — never forgotten. *Cantos* is a new 15-minute concerto which is a pocket version of the 35-minute *Don Quixote de la Mancha* to be premiered by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra next month.

In *Cantos de la Mancha* Lindberg frequently has to sing and play at the same time, and does one or two other things besides. "By the end, I really feel that I have been a human being," he says. "I have made all the mistakes that are not allowed for a soloist. I have thrown everything off, done it all, revealed everything." Birmingham may never be the same again.

• Xenakis's *Xylos*, tomorrow; Sandström's *Cantos de la Mancha*, Sunday, both at 7.30pm, Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham 0121-212 3333

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL OFFERS

LONDON

Arts Theatre

Apr 21-22 (7pm)

• WHAT do the poetic inhabitants of a mythical Welsh seaside town and a farmyard of politically active animals have in common? The answer is Guy Masterson, whose one-man evocations of *Under Milk Wood* and *Animal Farm* were hits at the Edinburgh Festival and are now set to take London by storm. Club members can buy two tickets for the price of one (normally £12 and £14) for *Milk Wood* (Apr 21) and *Animal Farm* (Apr 22). Tel 0171-836 3334, quoting your membership number.

Lyric, Hammersmith

To Apr 19

• THE Lyric was once famous for its revues — smart, sharp-witted evenings that looked at life through comedy and music. Now the revue is back, and *Then Again...* is packing them in with its combination of old favourites and specially

THE THEATRE CLUB

The Little Prince. Two tickets for the price of one (normally £8). Tel 0171-928 6363

New End Theatre

Apr 21-22

• ABSURD, comic and poignant, *Captain of the Birds* is a new play by Edward Carey, inspired by the life and work of the celebrated French writer and pilot, Antoine de Saint Exupéry, who used his experiences during the dangerous early days of aviation to explore the innocence and mystery of childhood in classics such as

TO JOIN the Theatre Club either send a cheque for £12.50, made payable to The Theatre Club, together with your name, address and telephone number to The Theatre Club, P.O. Box 2164, Colchester CO2 8LJ, or telephone 01206 235145 using your credit card. Please allow 28 days for delivery of your membership pack. For general inquiries call 0171-387 9673



PREVIEWS FROM 18 APRIL
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Siân brighter than the star

When I saw Pam Gems's *Marlene* in Oldham last October, I found myself less keen on the play than on the actress at its core. Despite the tinkering and tampering that has occurred since then, this remains the case. From the moment she swans up the aisle at the Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, magnificently trumpeting "Did I have a good trip? Is Bismarck a herring?", Siân Phillips is in effortless command of the faces blinking up at her. But is *Marlene* itself much more distinguished than those compendium shows that have recently been cramming the West End with tuneful tooties and potted bios? Not really.

Gems has always been fascinated by women who struggle to succeed in a male world. Hence her portraits of Queen Christina, Camille and, above all, the *Piaf* whom Dietrich regarded as "the empress" to her own "slave with the jar on the head". Whether or not that's a fair assessment, the French chanteuse emerges from the dramatic fray more interestingly and impressively than the German one. *Piaf* is the embattled survivor, feistily warring with her own self-destructive instincts. Dietrich

is the glamorous grannie who cannot resist the roar of the Holocaust and her subsequent return to an accusing, rejecting Germany, considerably raises the temperature of Sean Mathias's production.

Her people, her flesh, were complicit in the crimes of the century, and then they spat at her as a traitor! Phillips has only to whisper to make us share the pain and moral bewilderment. If only the rest of the evening demanded comparable depth of her.

Phillips gives us some from *Lili Marlene* to *Falling in Love Again*, and, especially when her tall, tapering figure is encased in that famously glittering sheath, sounds pretty good. In between she tells us just a little about 1930s Hollywood ("a sleepy village on the edge of nowhere") and her variegated love-life, but virtually nothing about her Junkers upbringing or life with her pet Svengali, the director Josef von Sternberg.

Even so, Phillips does not falter and, when she comes to the Holocaust and her subsequent return to an accusing, rejecting Germany, considerably raises the temperature of Sean Mathias's production.

Her people, her flesh, were complicit in the crimes of the century, and then they spat at her as a traitor! Phillips has only to whisper to make us share the pain and moral bewilderment. If only the rest of the evening demanded comparable depth of her.

The show eventually burns itself out with the shrieking guitar indulgence of *Two of a Kind* and, although it is tempting to excuse the band's rather slovenly and workmanlike performance as a common

Sixties old, new and borrowed

POP

opening night ailment, no such malady afflicted the Manic Street Preachers, who recently also began a lengthy tour in this city. Cast must dig deeper in future.

Marianne Faithfull ended her UEA show in Norwich with a weatherbeaten version of *As Tears Go By*, her first hit from 30 years ago. *John Street* writes. Then she was a pale, vulnerable convent girl; now she is a grandmother who has kicked a drug habit and made some fine rock albums. And when she sashays on stage, fixing her audience with a steady stare and a broad smile, she manages to summon up an entire era — from wide-eyed innocence to world-weary determination.

Although ostensibly an evocation of Weimar Germany, this 90-minute set is more autobiography than social history. It may be loosely pegged to the career of Kurt Weill, but it is more securely anchored to her own story. Weill's collaborations with Bertolt Brecht provide her with the opportunity to act out tiny musical dramas. With *Alabama Song*, *Pirate Jenny* and *Surabaya Johnny*, she is the angry victim. With *Mack the Knife* and *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, she is the cynical observer musing on the world's harsh ways.

She may not always hit the note, and her accent may slip erratically from Cockney to Home Counties, but her husky voice is a perfect medium for Weill's melodies. Only when she borrows from Noel Coward does she fail.

A table, chair and stool are her only props and pianist Paul Trueblood her only companion. But with these and some nicely told stories Faithfull provides an evening in which the attractions divide equally between the songs, the singing and the singer.

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Shriven on the holy isles

Jan Morris on the harsh lives of the ancient monks of Skellig

SUN DANCING
By Geoffrey Moorhouse
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £18.99
ISBN 0 297 81595 4

Nobody but Geoffrey Moorhouse, I think, could have written this wonderfully imaginative book about one of the most remarkable religious settlements of western Christianity, the medieval Celtic monastery on the Irish islands of Skellig. It is a subject precisely suited to his particular gifts — a feel for things spiritual, a tough taste for the ascetic, a grave and disciplined descriptive prose, human sympathy and absolute honesty. Others might taint the subject with the lurid or the sensational, or alternatively deaden it with book-learning: Moorhouse, to my mind, gets the mixture just right, and gives us an almost hallucinatory vivid re-enactment of a very peculiar human experience.

It was in the 6th century that monks of the Celtic Church first settled on the precipitous, uninhabited and storm-swept Skelligs, which lie eight miles in the Atlantic off the coast of Co Kerry. They remained

there, in conditions of appalling voluntary hardship, until the 13th century. Since then the islands have been uninhabited again, except for transient hermits, pilgrims, lighthouse keepers and tourists, but there remain the stone walls and ruined oratories of the monasteries: from these relics, high on the inaccessible flanks of the main island, and from sketchy historical records, Moorhouse has reconstructed the story of the Skellig monastery, start to finish.

It is a weird tale of holy self-denial — pointless to unbelievers, inspiring, I suppose, to

those who can accept that an entirely introspective and unproductive way of life, centred around constant prayer and masochistic discomfit, in some way brings the soul closer to God. Devised in the first place by the holy men of Middle Eastern deserts, living on the tops of pillars or immured in caves for years at a time, this mode of dedication seems even more grotesque when it is translated to the fierce seas of the Atlantic, and to add to the terrible nature of the islands, time and again the monks were raided by Vikings — just as awful as the fabulous beasts and forked devils that plagued the Desert Fathers.

The first part of the book, "The Tradition", consists entirely of Moorhouse's reconstruction of life on the Skelligs during their monastic centuries. This is masterly, written

with great restraint and scholarly care, and utterly convincing in its evocation of mortifications, mind-sets and charged emotions on those inhospitable slates. The second part, entitled "The Evidence", is really a collection of long footnotes, disguised as proper chapters, and detailing the reasons behind the book's imaginative conjectures. I thought this less satisfactory. I was perfectly happy not to know the reasons, having complete trust in Moorhouse's integrity, and I thought they made anti-climactic reading after the sombre work of art that came before.

So I sometimes found myself skimming through explanatory passages about the Synod of Whitby and the Monastic Horarium, and have already forgotten most of them learned allusions. I shall always remember, though, my nights and days on the Skelligs themselves, in the company of Moorhouse and those long-dead monks: ho-

ing the sparse gardens in the teeth of the wind, gathering the fish from the pool nets among the rocks, chanting in the cold as the dawn broke, fighting the demons of self-esteem, performing harsh

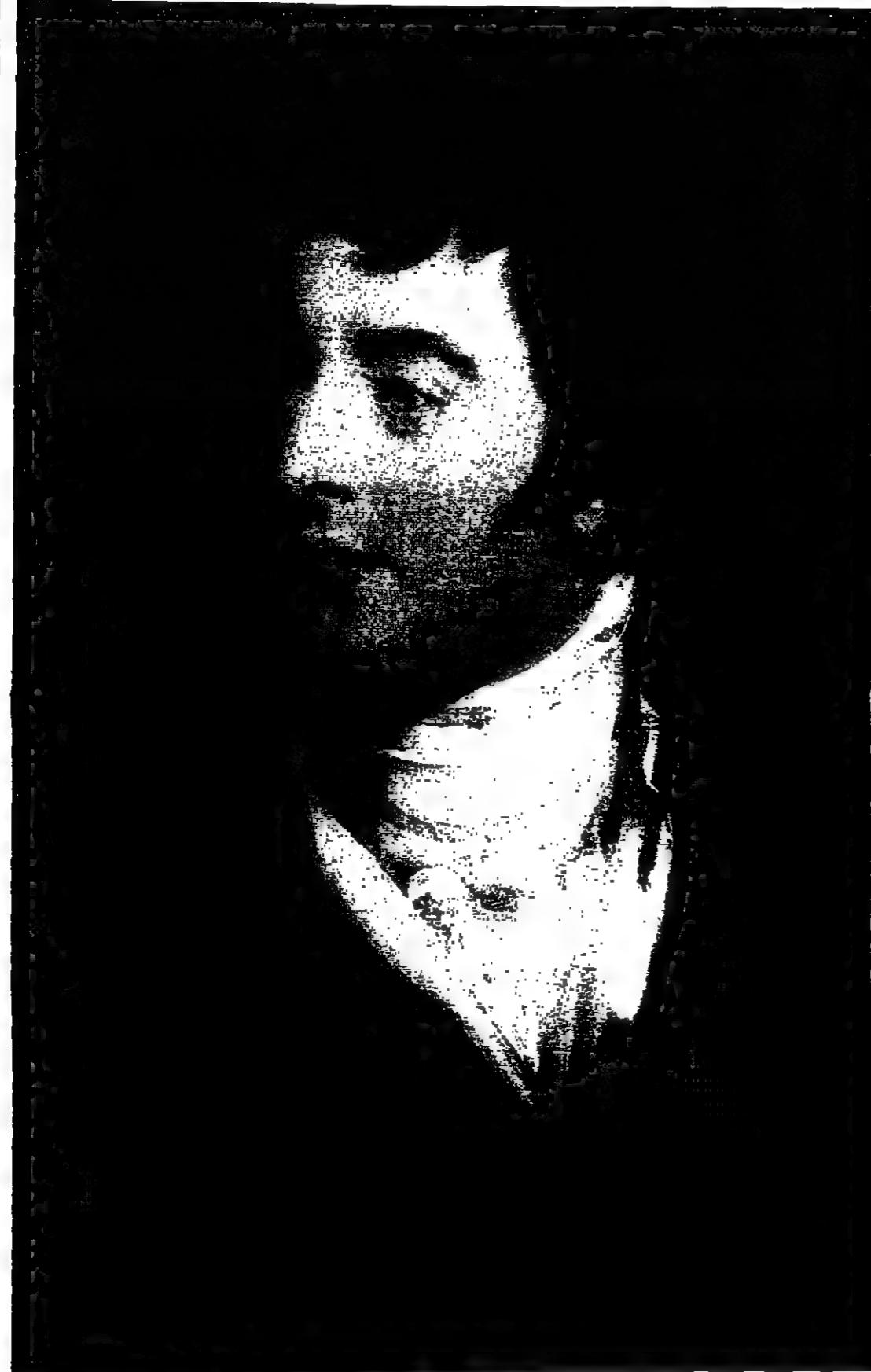
penances at the abbot's command, watching the sun dance in ecstatic vision, assembling terrified up the scree when the lion-prow of a Viking longship slides into view among the rocks below.

It is as though I were really there, just as, if I believed in such things, I could almost suppose that in some previous incarnation Geoffrey Moorhouse was a monk on the Skelligs himself.



God's little acres: the islands of Skellig were home to a monastic order for 700 years

A rebel to the manor born



"The epitome of radical chic": Fitzgerald by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, two years before his death

Peter Ackroyd on the extraordinary life of an 18th-century aristocratic Irish revolutionary

In the infinitely complicated and ambiguous history of Ireland, Lord Edward Fitzgerald emerges as one of its most ambivalent figures. He was a brother of the premier peer of that country, but he attempted to mount a revolution. He adored his family, and spent half his life gardening, but he advocated violence as the surest means of subverting the established authorities.

It had all begun so differently. He was born, in 1763, a Kildare, the great Irish family which alternately confused and bedevilled English monarchs by claiming local sovereignty without demanding complete independence. By the middle of the 18th century, when "Pretty Eddy" was first presented to an adoring world, it was still the most powerful force in the country. "Eddy", pretty or not, could only add lustre to the name. "Tis an almost perfect little Being," his mother wrote, "literally having no fault, but too much warmth of temper." It might almost be his epitaph.

He was protected, and cosseted, with entirely predictable results. All his life he remained amiable and confiding, but obstinate; he was energetic and optimistic, but unpredictable. He was educated by his doting mother on Rousseauian principles and, in the notorious phrase of the 1770s, developed into "a man of feeling" susceptible and refined in equal measure. He would have led an agreeable life if he had remained at home and devoted that sensibility to private pursuits; but, instead, he roamed abroad and took a larger view.

He joined the Army, of course as an officer, and first saw battle at Charleston during the American War of Independence. Here a liberated African slave, Tony Small, saved his life, the saviour became his servant, and soon the two men were inseparable. It was the first occasion when Edward Fitzgerald's belief in the "equality of man" was put into practice. It was also to become the principal, if fatal, thread of his life. A subsequent visit to Nova Scotia, where he was made a chief of the Iroquois, only confirmed his egalitarianism. So, on his return to London, he became an enthusiastic supporter of the French Revolution and of Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*.

He has not been treated with entire seriousness by contemporary historians. Roy Foster in his *Modern Ireland*, describes him as "the epitome of radical chic". He was, indeed, a radical of a philosophical rather than a native kind. Stella Tillyard justifiably depicts him as a product of the Enlightenment, who always remained "cosmopolitan" rather than "national". In that he was closer to Fox than to Blake but, in her very vivid depiction of late 18th-century London, Tillyard notes the ease with which he could travel from the Whig drawing rooms of Piccadilly to the dissenting bookshops of St Paul's Churchyard. For one moment, they were allied. But then the moment ended.

The twin forces of domestic oppression and French fanaticism led many erstwhile liberals to renounce their allegiance to the revolutionary cause. But Lord Edward Fitzgerald was different.

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The twin forces of domestic oppression and French fanaticism led many erstwhile liberals to renounce their allegiance to the revolutionary cause. But Lord Edward Fitzgerald was different.

Tillyard offers a very convincing portrait of this colourful, if somewhat startling, figure. *Citizen Lord* is an example of history aspiring to the condition of a good novel; it is by no means an idiosyncratic effort on her part, since this has become an age when the traditional forms of fiction and history are breaking apart. That is why she is able to comprehend historical facts with the imagination of an artist rather than that of a simple chronicler. Her previous book was entitled *Aristocrats*, and in this new work she is particularly good at conveying the life of the late 18th-century Irish peerage, bibulous and spendthrift, louche when not entirely demented.

This was the world from which Fitzgerald came, and in part it explains the particular nature of his radicalism. As an impetuous younger son of a grand family, he was in turn patronised and rejected by his more wealthy or powerful relatives; he was a "man of feeling" who interpreted the world in terms of private sentiment and as a result came to believe that, in Tillyard's words, English society itself was

both "divisive and heartless".

So he became a rebel. He travelled to Dublin, and was soon associated with the United Irish; he consorted with French agents, and urged the Directory to mount an armed invasion of Ireland. He wished to create a popular republic; he wore light green cravats and began to learn Gaelic. At first it was believed that he was only "playing revolution", in the phrase of his contemporaries, but he was very serious indeed.

He is now almost unknown to name and fame. He is one of those curious figures who somehow seem to slip out of history, although they were of vast significance in their own time. Thomas Moore, the balladeer, ran to look at him in the street because his "name had, from my school days, been associated with all that was noble, patriotic and chivalrous". So why has he been forgotten? He is an anomaly: he offends historical decorum by being both a revolutionary and an aristocrat, a lord and a democrat. He also failed, and historians of the old progressive school do not dwell upon failure.

That is why Tillyard's book is so welcome. It is also very timely in the sense that, in recording the fatal career of one extraordinary man, she is able to draw suggestive parallels with certain aspects of contemporary Irish life. She describes the policy of "terror and repression" by which late 18th-century government was conducted in that country: here are some of the earliest records of internments, punishment beatings, and caches of arms. The world of the United Irishman was one where "anyone might be an informer, anyone might be a spy".

It was in fact espionage which destroyed Fitzgerald's attempt at armed revolution. He travelled only at night. He wore a heavy disguise and was always surrounded by armed bodyguards. Yet an informer traced him: he was arrested and, after being shot, imprisoned in Dublin Castle. The rebellion of 1798 ended in defeat and disaster for the United Irishmen, while its leader lay dying in a prison cell. But Edward Fitzgerald is not to be admired or even pitied. Tillyard herself has simply tried to understand him and, in that act of understanding, she is able to convey an essential truth about the man and his period.

ALSO for cartophiles is a seminar at the London Transport Museum on April 26, on the theme of the current



BIBLIOMANE

exhibition, "The Joy of Maps" — Oh my America, my new-found-land. For information, call 0171 379 6344. Or you may like to splash out on Richard Horwood's *Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, the Borough of Southwark and Parts Adjoining, showing every house* (1800), a 26in to the mile map of Georgian London, to be sold at Sotheby's on Friday (est. £3,000-4,000).

THE dormant historical research collection of the old Ministry of Works, strong in the fields of architecture and archaeology, has been transferred to English Heritage in Savile Row, where it is being recatalogued. It joins Sir Mayson Beeson's reference collection of books and his three to four thousand prints of the architecture and social life of London.

THE history of the book has been intensely studied and documented. Yet new areas of research continue to emerge. *Bookcloth 1823-1980* by William Tomlinson and Richard Masters is virtually the first work on the binding material that superseded leather and was itself superseded by toughened papers. Clearly written and with 36 "feeler" samples, it is largely a company history of Winterbottom's, which established something like a world monopoly, supplying 50 countries from Salford.

The story parallels the rise and fall of the Monotype Corporation, which supplied the world with hot-metal typesetting machinery. But the earliest history of binding in cloth is still unclear. Can the maroon-and-black horizontally striped cloth on my copy of Coleridge's *Table Talk* (1853) really be the publisher's original binding? Did Murray's want it to look like a Liquorice Allsort?

Bookcloth is available from PO Box 17, Maple, Stockport, SK6 5FD. Informative though it is, an edition of 1,500 copies at £325 looks optimistic to me. The Incline Press's volume of essays *In Praise of Patterned Papers* is perhaps more realistic, with 360 copies, beginning at £9.99 (11a Printer Street, Oldham, OL1 1PN).

JIM McCUE

Suffer with success

Derwent May

HOW PROUST CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE
By Alain de Botton
Picador, £12.99
ISBN 0 330 34762 4

Just tell me in two lines what you wanted to say." But de Botton suggests that Proust's sentences can teach us how to go slow, look properly at things, enlarge our sympathies, even find a tragic or comic novel in a short newspaper item. When Harold Nicolson met Proust in the Paris Ritz in 1919, and talked to him about the peace conference, the novelist cried: "N'allez pas si vite" — and personally showed Nicolson how to tell his story more vividly.

Again, in his chapter "How To Suffer Successfully", de Botton suggests that if Swann, Proust's man-about-town, had been able to listen to his creator when he was experiencing hideous pangs of jealousy over his mistress Odette, he would have learnt how to turn jealousy into understanding. We — declares de Botton



Marcel (right) with brother Robert: an unlikely therapist

The sea yields up its secrets

Michael Arditti

THE RAVEN
By Peter Landesman
Flamingo £12.99
ISBN 0 00 225 551 0

EVER since Melville's assault on the great white whale (and with it the great American novel), the sea off the New England coast has proved as fruitful to writers as to fishermen. The latest launch into it is Peter Landesman, whose immensely accomplished first novel offers a fictional account of a real-life disaster, the sinking of the pleasure boat, *The Raven*, in 1941.

To muddy the waters still further, of the 36 people on board, only the bodies of the captain (naked and strapped to a keg) and the 14 women were discovered, leading to wild rumours that the men had been captured and enslaved by the Germans. Out of the bare bones — and disfigured corpses — of this story, Landesman has fashioned a fascinating fiction, which is part historical mystery, in which various figures, including a young fisherman and a sensation-seeking journalist, investigate the disaster, part a psychological study in survivor guilt, and part an exploration of disappearing values in a changing world.

This is a magnificent debut. Landesman is the equal of E. Annie Proulx in his handling of the fishermen's hard lives and tangy dialogue. The Raven displays the allegorical power of the best sea stories wedded to the thematic richness and psychological depth of the finest fiction.

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Bargains of the week — from new services to Bogotá and Palma to fly-drive holidays to Los Angeles

FLIGHTS

DUTCH Airline Transavia has introduced all-economy flights between Gatwick and Amsterdam with tickets from £69 return. Details: 01293 538181.

■ LATVIAN airline Rair has a £199 excursion between Gatwick and Riga. Details: 01293 535772.

■ COLOMBIAN carrier Avianca launches a twice-weekly Heathrow to Bogotá service on May 3 with fares starting at £540 return including a free domestic connection to most cities. Details: 0990 767747.

■ AIR Tickets Direct has a £21 fare during April with Continental between Gatwick, Manchester and New York. Details: 0990 320321.

■ BRITISH Airways now flies five times a day between Gatwick and Glasgow. Return fares on this new route start at £72. Details: 0345 222111.

■ NEW airline Futura Direct inaugurates twice-weekly Gatwick to Palma flights on May 2 for £140. Details: 0990 772233.

HOLIDAYS

GLASGOW can now be reached from London in five hours on the 15 daily Virgin West Coast train services. SuperApex returns — which must be booked at least 14 days in advance — cost from £29 return. The full range of fares is available from 0345 991995.

■ INGHAMS Eurobreak is offering three nights' B&B at the two-star Gavarni Hotel in Paris, travelling by Eurostar or air, from £174 per person, including Seine cruise, transfers and guidebook. Details: 0990 336336.

■ KUONI is cutting a range of prices until the end of June. A new "limited editions" brochure has six nights in Cuba from £299 per person, including accommodation at the Comodoro Hotel in Havana and return flights from Gatwick. Details: 01306 740500.

■ JAMES Villa Holidays has a few remaining villas in Pollensa, Majorca this month and the first week in May. Prices are from £185 per person for five people sharing, to £259 for two and include return flights from Gatwick and group car hire. Details: 01732 840846.

■ UNTIL June 15, Hayes & Jarvis are offering 14 nights' room-only accommodation at the Golden Sands hotel in Penang for £669 per person. The price, which includes

return flights from Heathrow, represents a saving of £114 on brochure price. Details: 0181-222 7822.

■ UNIJET has cut the price of its flight only and fly-drive holidays to Los Angeles this summer by up to £100. Weekly non-stop flights from Manchester start on June 3 and from Gatwick on June 23. Prices start from £299 for flights and £339 for fly-drives. Details: 0800 856 8000.



TWELVE nights at the Berjaya Mahe beach resort hotel in Seychelles are available through Crystal Worldwide for £789 per person until the end of June. The price includes room-only accommodation and return flights from Gatwick. Details: 0181-241 5161.

HOTELS

HILTON in the UK is offering free or discounted car parking at its hotels located close to five airports — Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Manchester and East Midlands — for guests staying at least one night under its new "take off and touch down" programme. Details: 0800 856 8000.

■ THE summer rate at the Ritz Hotel in London from July 14 until end of August is £200 plus VAT for a standard room including breakfast. The normal rate is £225 without breakfast. Details: 0171-493 8181.

■ A SPECIAL weekend break price of £99 per person including dinner is available at the Doncaster Moat House close to the Doncaster racecourse and the 12th-century castle at Conisbrough. Details: 01302 799988.

■ THE "Whaleaway Country Break" is a relaxing offer from the Spread Eagle Hotel at Midhurst, Sussex. The cost is £130 per person for two nights including dinner and breakfast. Details: 01730 816911.

■ SEE the Royal Pageant of the Horse Show at Windsor Great Park from July 4 and stay at the Shepperton Moat House. Two nights accommodation through Superbreak Mini-Holidays including tick-

et, guide and coach transfer is available at £175 per person. Details: 0161-238 5257.

■ THE Park Consul Hotel in Cheltenham is now opening its Conservatory Restaurant for dinner and has a special offer of a free bottle of wine with the meal until the end of June. Details: 0171-225 7500.

■ SUMMER breaks at Bodysgallen Hall in North Wales start from April 27 at £94 per person per night, including a visit to a local stately home or garden. Details: 01730 816911.

■ RADISSION SAS Hotels in Europe now has a special three-hour express laundry and pressing service. Clothes handed in before 8pm are guaranteed to be returned the same evening. Details: 0800 374411.

FERRIES

LE Shuttle has £59 daytrips for departures before 6am. Five-day return tickets from £79 and standard returns from £149 are available year-round, if booked before April 30. Details: 0990 700800.

■ RED Funnel has extended its £25 day-return offer for a car plus four people until May 22 on the Southampton-Cowes route. Travel on 11am ferry only. Details: 01703 334010.

■ IRISH Ferries has a £149 fare on its Holyhead-Dublin route for a car and two adults until May 21. The line also has a £59 fare for two, including rail from London. Travel is off-peak, valid until December 17. Details: 0345 171717.

■ STEENA has an offer of £59 for two people, from London to Holyhead by rail, then fast ferry to Dun Laoghaire, near Dublin. Details: 0990 455485.

■ SCANDINAVIAN Seaways has return fares for a car and four passengers from £149 to Amsterdam, Hamburg (£250), Esbjerg, Denmark (£270) and Gothenburg (£340). Details: 0990 333000.

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Rhyl is given a rough ride

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT

THE Welsh seaside town of Rhyl is still smarting from the savaging it received from a respected tourist guide book.

"Anything you can do in Rhyl you can do better elsewhere," says the *Rough Guide to Wales*, which was published last week. There is, writes the guide book popular with younger tourists, "almost no reason to stay in this decaying Edwardian resort completely disfigured by amusement arcades". Despite European Union funding, the town "falls on the most basic of requirements".

But 1.5 million holidaymakers still chose to spend their main holidays in the North Wales town last summer and there were twice as many day trippers. Jill Mariner, secretary of the Rhyl Hotels and Guest Houses Association, is scathing about the book's comments: "People have been coming here generation after generation so we must be doing something right," she says.

And the town's mayor, Ann Jones, has offered to show Paul Whitfield, the writer of the *Rough Guide* report, around the resort. "I'm confident he would change his mind once he saw all the attractions," she says. "Over the Easter weekend it was packed out here. It's a children's paradise."

The big wheel and the rollercoaster ride of the funfair dominate Foyd's harbour while rising above everything is the 240ft-high Skytower, bought second-hand from Glasgow, with its revolving observation platform. Bed and breakfast in a guesthouse costs an average of £15.

Millions of pounds, including European cash, have been spent redeveloping the resort's seafront. The Sun Centre with Europe's first indoor surfing pool, is one of Wales' top visitor attractions.

It may not be enough to satisfy the *Rough Guide*, but for millions Rhyl is the perfect holiday resort.



Even during a pause in hostilities, Sarajevo basked in the sun. However, a huge number of buildings were destroyed or damaged

Fresh start for Sarajevo

The Pope is visiting Bosnia-Herzegovina's capital. Chris Lockwood reports on the the war-torn city's rapid improvement

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA this weekend will take its most positive and public step yet to emerge from years of war and destruction when the Pope pays his first official visit to the battered capital, Sarajevo.

His visit, together with the reopening of vital air services, is a significant move in the country's attempt to resume its place as the Balkans' natural centre for tourism and business.

On Monday Austrian Airlines became the first West European carrier since the end of the conflict to serve the city with the first of its thrice-weekly services from Vienna. The airline has optimistic plans to increase the number of flights to four and eventually six a week by the end of the year.

Before the war, Sarajevo's population was about 500,000. But during the fighting, thousands fled and many were killed. A huge number of buildings were destroyed or severely damaged and there was, subsequently, an enormous loss in industrial production. Energy-supply com-

panies were smashed and health facilities, schools, bridges and railway lines were also wrecked.

The total financial damage throughout Bosnia runs into is estimated at about \$80 billion. In certain areas, people went without water, heat or outside food sources for two years. But despite the horror, the city is returning to normal, more rapidly than expected.

Four months ago, there were no glass windows in the city. But today the glass is back. The restaurants are full. Benetton has opened an outlet — and so has the Islamic Republic of Iran, with a gleaming information centre. On the same city centre street there is also the new office for Austrian Airlines, transformed from burnt-out store front to shiny ticket centre in weeks.

Turkish Airlines is due to launch flights twice a week from Istanbul from April 18, and Crossair plans to start its services three times a week from Zurich on June 9. British Airways, which recently resumed regular scheduled services to Zagreb, says that it is monitoring the growth of travel to the whole area before deciding whether to fly direct to Sarajevo from London.

"It is certainly a long road back for Sarajevo," says Herbert Felber, area manager of Central Europe for Austrian Airlines. "But out of chaos must come opportunity, and although today there are hardly any international companies represented here, at least 500 are interested and want to help in the recovery of the region."

There is no civilian control tower or radar at the airport, which is controlled by French soldiers of the United Nations Stabilisation Force (SFOR) with air space controlled by the American military.

The only radar is military, and that only monitors flights, rather than controlling them. It is, the authorities say, safe as long as the frequently changing weather does not present a cloud base of less than 4,000ft.

Tourists, desperately needed by the city and the country, are trickling back. And business travellers are flying in to take advantage of a range of opportunities for, quite simply, the country still needs everything. But only two hotels up in Western standards — the 382-room Holiday Inn and the 85-room Bosnia Hotel — are currently available in the city.

German marks, Bosnian dinars and Croatian kuna are accepted currency, but credit cards are not. As the recovery gathers pace, the writing of the past remains on the walls of Sarajevo. On the main street, Marshal Tito Boulevard, someone has written in English: "Paradise Lost."

Private jets take on the airlines

YOU have to admire the

way that professional business travellers, and the companies who employ them, are able to overcome the seemingly insurmountable difficulties that can appear suddenly in their path.

Take, for example, the problems of travelling in the former Soviet Union. The unreliability and hazards of local scheduled airlines are enough to put anybody off.

Yet many businessmen have found a way of bypassing the obstacles to trading and have also produced a bonanza for Western plane-makers by using private aircraft, either owned or hired.

The opportunities for Western businesses in rapidly developing countries such as Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are growing daily, with joint ventures in oil, gas, minerals and even retailing waiting to be snapped up.

Boeing has decided to increase production of a new business jet based on the popular 737 from two to six a month even before the first has been built, and more than 40 will be delivered within the first two years.

One British company is even converting a Boeing 747 into the world's most luxurious executive airliner, capable of carrying a maximum of 67 passengers on prestige business trips to corporate events.

By using smaller regional airports, the corporate traveller can now avoid congested hubs, be free to fly when he decides rather than stick to the airline timetable, and almost invariably beat a rival to vital meetings.

Business and corporate jets are no longer the preserve of the rich. They may prove to be the catalyst for the biggest change in flying habits in decades.

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Anniversary of Kamikaze flight

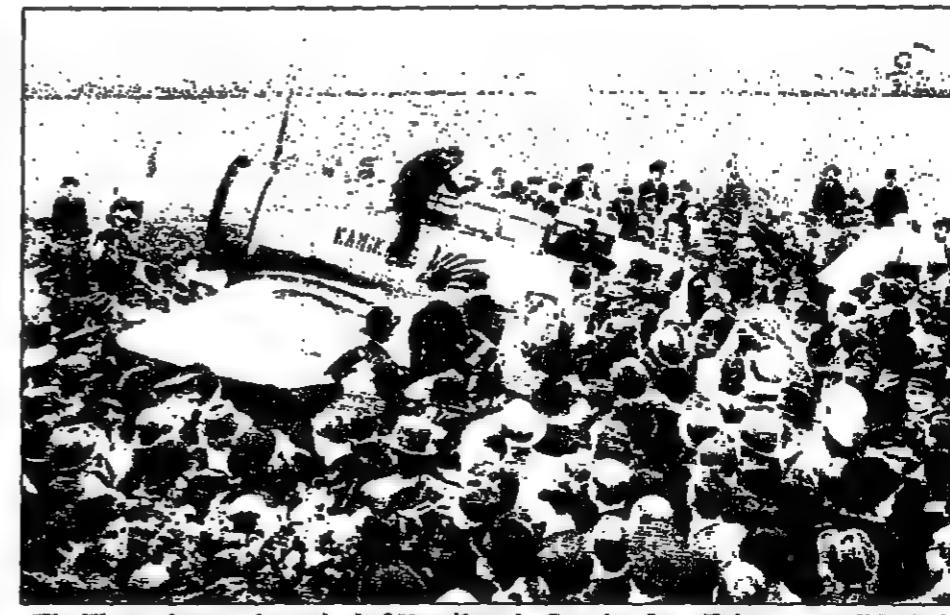
MORE than 400 Japanese gathered in London last night. Harvey Elliott writes, to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of a record-breaking flight from Tokyo to Croydon by an aircraft known as *Divine Wind*, or *Kamikaze*.

The all-metal aircraft built by Mitsubishi had been named *Kamikaze* shortly before it took off on the 94-hour journey to London. It was aiming both to break the 100-hour barrier and to celebrate the coronation of King George VI which was due to take place the following month.

More than 4,000 people watched the arrival of *Kamikaze* when it landed at Croydon on April 9, 1937, and *The Times* covered in detail what was then regarded as one of the most important aviation events.

As the airmen struggled to the ground from *Divine Wind*, they were greeted with cheers and cries of "Banzai" ("live forever"), were decked with garlands of flowers and were submitted to an ordeal of handshaking and congratulations, we reported.

A message was sent from the *Asahi Shimbun*, the Japanese newspaper which sponsored the flight, to "The British nation" through the pages of



The Times pictures the arrival of *Kamikaze* in Croydon from Tokyo on April 9, 1937

and the mechanic, Kenji Tsukagoshi, spent 50 hours in the air during the journey time of 94 hours and 18 minutes and managed to snatched only ten hours' sleep.

Mr Tsukagoshi had a British mother whom he had hoped to find waiting for him at Croydon. Lionel Harvey, the author who is researching a book about the epic journey.

Both men, however, were killed during the war and the aircraft was destroyed during an emergency landing off Taiwan.

A non-stop flight in a Boeing 747-400 today takes 13 hours 30 minutes.

Simulator is too scary for public

THE world's most sophisticated cabin crew training simulator has been put out of bounds to all but airline professionals — because it is too realistic, Harvey Elliott writes.

The simulator, made in Canada, initiates a range of problems which might be encountered by cabin crew. These can include a fire, cabin decompression, emergency landing on water, or even a crash. Each is accompanied by realistic sounds of passengers screaming as the "aircraft" fills with smoke or lurches in response to the computer messages input from a tutor outside the cabin.

But many emerge from the training session in a state of shock at the realism of learning how to deal with an aircraft emergency.

Now they have been ordered to practice serving meals, emergency evacuation techniques and other in-flight skills only on staff rather than on the public.

The success of the Emergency Evacuation Simulator has been so great that other airlines are queuing to use spare time on it.

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Defect caused insured damage

Promet Engineering (Singapore) PTE Ltd v Sturge and Others (The Nukla)

Before Sir Stephen Brown, President; Lord Justice Hobhouse and Lord Justice Ward

Judgment March 26

When deciding whether insurers were liable under a hull and machinery policy incorporating clauses which extended ordinary marine cover so as to include risks which would not otherwise be covered, the questions to be asked were whether there was a latent defect in the hull and if so what constituted that defect; and whether the defect caused damage to the hull.

If the answer to the second question was that there was an actual damage, over and above a latent defect merely made patent, then the insurers were liable.

The Court of Appeal so stated in a judgment allowing an appeal by Promet Engineering (Singapore) PTE Ltd, the plaintiffs, from the dismissal by Mr Justice Tuckey ([1994] 1 Lloyd's Rep 89) of their primary claim for damage for breach of contract against Nicholas Colwyn Sturge as representative underwriter.

The insurance under a hull and

machinery policy incorporated into the Time Clauses Hull to include risks which would not otherwise be covered and Institute Additional Perils Clauses — Hull, see *Thames and Mersey Marine Insurance Company Ltd v Hamilton Fraser and Co* [1887] 12 App Cas 484. It covered the plaintiffs' accommodation platform Nukla, at the relevant time.

The underwriters had refused to indemnify the plaintiff in respect of loss incurred in repairing the platform.

Mr Stephen Ruttle for the appellant plaintiffs; Mr David Millett and Mr Nigel Eaton for the respondent defendants.

LORD JUSTICE HOBHOUSE said that the Nukla had been in service in the Java Sea since 1983. To stop the legs sinking into the soft seabed they ended in a welded steel box called a spudcan.

It was not disputed that the circumferential welds were not properly profiled. As a result fatigue cracking occurred which, when discovered on a routine inspection in 1987, was so serious that the platform had to be towed back to Singapore for extensive repair.

The plaintiffs claimed for the cost of repairs to the platform, towing charges and other expenses. It was agreed that their insurance policies covered them for the relevant period.

However, the defendants denied liability, contending that there was no consequential damage. All that had occurred was that the latent defect of poorly profiled welding in each leg manifested itself in the cracks discovered thus no damage occurred to the hull within the policy clauses.

The case relied on by the defendants to support their submission that the cracks were merely latent defects made patent did not alter the position that in each situation the question remained essentially one of fact: see *Oceanic Steamship Company v Faber* ([1908] 1 Corn Cas 179; [1907] 13 Com Cas 28; CA).

As in the present case the answer to each of those questions was in the affirmative it followed that the insured were entitled to recover an indemnity from the underwriters and accordingly the appeal on the plaintiffs' primary claim would be allowed.

Lord Justice Ward gave a concurring judgment and Sir Stephen Brown agreed.

Solicitors: Norton Rose; Clyde & Co.

Jail warning for city fraudsters

Regina v Ward

Regina v Hendry

Attorney-General's Reference (Nos 14, 15 and 16 of 1995)

Before Lord Justice McCowan, Mr Justice Howitt and Mr Justice Hooper

Judgment March 21

Those who took part in conspiracy to defraud involving the creation of false share markets to influence the fate of takeovers should know that if caught they would highly likely go to prison.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so stated on a reference by the Attorney-General under section 36 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988. It held that concurrent community service orders of 220 hours imposed on Michael Grainger Ward and Jeremy John Alan Howarth and a conditional discharge for 12 months imposed on George Hendry were unduly lenient and substituted, respectively, two years imprisonment, 30 months and 12 months suspended

for two years. The sentences were imposed in March 1995 at Southwark Crown Court by Judge Mota Singh. Their Lordships had in such case taken into account previous good character, good performance since the trial and the effect on the families but had no hesitation in concluding that community service orders were inappropriate and too lenient.

Lord Justice Ward was significantly different. He did not play a part and he pleaded guilty so that the right sentence would have been 15 months imprisonment. He was already suffering ill-health in the form of Parkinson's disease, diabetes, coronary arterial disease and depression and was very much worse off after the considerable delay, so that in those exceptional circumstances the court could impose a sentence of 12 months imprisonment and suspend two years.

He was also given credit for having established a small business on which he and his family were dependent. Their Lordships in their mercy and discretion would not discount him.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Headquarters; Memory Crystal; Simons Muirhead & Burton; Burton Copeland.

The appropriate sentence for Ward would have been three years and for Howarth 30 months imprisonment; with a discount for the element of double jeopardy the

offenders had chosen, as was their right, to appeal against conviction.

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Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Headquarters; Memory Crystal; Simons Muirhead & Burton; Burton Copeland.

Tax penalty notices within jurisdiction

Philips v Income Tax General Commissioners for New Forest West and Another

The imposition by general commissioners of two penalties of £4,000 each on a taxpayer for her continued failure to comply with a notice requiring her to provide them with information was within the commissioners' jurisdiction and would not be interfered with.

Mr Justice Lightman so held in

the Chancery Division on March 10 dismissing an appeal by Georgina Philips against the imposition of the penalties by the New Forest West general commissioners on July 10 and November 17, 1995.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the taxpayer had settled with the Revenue an investigation into her tax affairs, making payment of £29,000.

The commissioners had issued information but was still trying to do so.

It was clear that there was a failure by the taxpayer to provide information.

The commissioners had jurisdiction to make the orders they had found serious default by the taxpayer that justified their imposition and her appeal against the imposition of the penalties had to be dismissed.

Mr David Iwi for AIB Finance Ltd; Mr Peter Peter for the respondent.

Mr Justice Lightman so held in

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RACING: VIRUS HINDERS WARREN PLACE TEAM'S PREPARATION

Shadow cast over Cecil's Guineas aspirations

By JULIAN MUSCAT

HENRY CECIL's ambitions on the Newmarket classics received a jolt when his team of high-class fillies yesterday declined their work engagements on the Newmarket trial grounds. It later emerged that the trainer's Warren Place string is under a cloud.

All meaningful gallops have been suspended pending the outcome of a series of tests, the results of which are due later this week. A bug has been circulating Cecil's Newmarket stable over the winter months and some horses have yet to shake it off.

"One or two of them have had a little bit of an infection on their lungs," Cecil said. "As a precaution, I will be taking blood tests and scoping horses over the next two days. We have had our fair share of coughing and ringworm and the yard is not completely clear of it yet."

This unwelcome development is sure to send tremors through ante-post betting lists for the 1,000 and 2,000 Guineas next month. So strong is Cecil's pool of fillies that he entered a quartet for the 2,000 Guineas, traditionally the pre-

serve of colts. Among them is Sleepytime, whose absence from work yesterday triggered the alarm.

Sleepytime also dominates betting exchanges for the 1,000 Guineas: she contracted to 9-4 favourite from 11-4 after sustained support on Monday. Although the twice-raced filly is reported clear of infection, Cecil is withholding her from fast work until veterinarians

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: SONGSHEET (3.30 Folkestone)
Next best: Bubbly (4.30 Folkestone)

provide him with a more detailed assessment of the stable's health.

Warren Place is traditionally in full swing for the Craven meeting at Newmarket next week. But running plans seem sure to be affected. "It is hoped that Sleepytime will take her chance in the Fred Darling Stakes [at Newbury a week tomorrow]," Cecil said. "Otherwise, I am not sure we will have a runner in Tuesday's

Nell Gwyn Stakes at Newmarket. We must get the results of the tests before I put anything under pressure at home."

Cecil's stables houses four of the leading 1,000 Guineas candidates in Sleepytime, Reams Of Verse, Yashmak and Fleet River. Reams Of Verse and Yashmak were below par over the winter, although both fillies now appear to have recovered. None of the quartet was sighted by Newmarket work-watchers yesterday, but a favourable conclusion to the testing programme will see them resume on Saturday.

A portion of the ill wind circling Warren Place came at Nottingham on Tuesday, when Shaheen, Cecil's first runner of the season, fluctuated wildly in the betting ring. His price varied between 3-1 and 7-1 before settling at 7-2; the colt could finish only third.

Punters have become accustomed to Cecil's first runner of the new season obliging hand-somely at short odds.

It has not been a good week for punters in general. Only five days ago, Bahrain, the 2,000 Guineas favourite, was ruled out of the race with a big-race double never previously achieved.

dolphin-owned Shamikh was immediately promoted to favouritism.

Should Sleepytime falter, Godolphin's Midnight Paradise will do likewise for the 1,000 Guineas — unless Pas De Reponse posts a sensational victory at Maisons-Laffitte tomorrow. The benefits of wintering horses in Dubai have again become evident; in three years Godolphin has never suffered from the viral infections now commonplace throughout Britain.

Anti-post punters are unlikely to be stung in exchanges over the Whitbread Gold Cup at Sandown on April 26 because bookmakers may not frame advance prices. More than half the 48-strong entry was withdrawn from the contest yesterday.

Doubts also linger over several of the 22 horses standing their ground. Avon Anson and Go Ballistic are unlikely runners after their Aintree exertions but Mudahim, trained by Jenny Pitman, remains on target for the prestigious steeplechase. Winner of the Irish Grand National last month, Mudahim will attempt a big-race double never previously achieved.

It has not been a good week for punters in general. Only five days ago, Bahrain, the 2,000 Guineas favourite, was ruled out of the race with a big-race double never previously achieved.



Mudahim is chasing an historic double in the Whitbread Gold Cup at Sandown

SQUASH

Marshall guides Halifax to final

By COLIN MCQUILLAN

POTTERS Bar will defend their SRA National League championship against Queens Halifax on April 21 after consolidating their two-leg semi-final against Chichester to a 6-4 winning result in Hampshire late on Tuesday night.

With Sue Wright, the British national champion, reversing her surprise first-leg defeat by Linda Charman, the Chichester fifth-string, the match hung on the deciding first-string rubber between John Ransome and Nathan Dugan, who went to Potters Bar when Dugan, the England No 22, retired injured.

Queens Halifax also came through 6-4 on aggregate against Broxbourne, this time with the middle-order providing the winning edge on their home courts, while David Campion found the steadily-improving Peter Marshall just too much to handle at first-string.

Campion had expertly exploited the match ruthlessness of the double-handed former world No 2 when they met in the early part of Marshall's comeback from chronic fatigue syndrome in the first leg. However, Marshall spent last week at the British Open championships in Cardiff sparring with old opponents after losing to Brett Martin, the No 8 seed from Australia, in the first round and that extra exposure to match-play took the 25-year-old a pace beyond Campion's elegant style on Tuesday.

With Marcus Berrett pull-

Results 42

ing back from 1-2 down against Rodney Durbach, the tough South African playing at second-string for Broxbourne, and Lee Beachill, the British junior champion, joining Adam Toes in repeating their first-leg control of Julian Wellings and Stuart Cowie, the Yorkshire side safely absorbed Marshall's improvement and the continued absence of Cassandra Jackman.

Jackman injured an ankle just before the women's international between England and Australia at the end of last month and also pulled out of the British Open, leaving the field clear for an all-Australian final in Cardiff between Michelle Martin and Sarah Fitzgerald. Only Wright challenged the two Australians last week in Cardiff and Halifax must hope that Jackman can mend and train in time to contest the women's string in the league final if they hope to take the title away from the combative Potters Bar squad.

EQUESTRIANISM

Windsor has best intention

By JENNY MACARTHUR

THE Royal Windsor Horse Show, which is to host the British Nations Cup for the first time next month, will cost £1 million to put on and will be, in the words of Michael Bullen, the chairman, "the biggest and best horse show in the world".

In marked contrast to Hickstead's ailing fortunes, Windsor is enjoying a new lease of life. Three leading new sponsors, Hildon, Land Rover and Samsung, have joined Harrods and Beneficial, more than £200,000 has been invested in improving the facilities, including the provision of two extra rings, and, for the first time, an outside contractor is being employed to look after the ground in the arenas.

The acquisition of the Nations Cup, which Windsor was asked to stage only two weeks ago after the cancellation of Hickstead's Nations Cup meeting, could not have been more timely.

Windsor had already decided to bring back international showjumping, for the first time for 24 years, and the Nations Cup, which will take place on Sunday, May 18, should help to attract leading riders and horses. Germany, France, Holland, Great Britain, Ireland and Belgium are expected to compete.

Other events at the show include international carriage driving, dressage, showing and, for the first time, a country fair. More than 3,000 entries have been received.

HAMILTON PARK

THUNDERER
2.20 Mel's Baby, 2.50 Step N Go, 3.20 BE WARNED (nap), 3.50 Risky Whisky, 4.20 Share, 4.90 Lord Haute.

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.50 RISKY WHISKY.

GOING: SOFT (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS
TOT: JACKPOT MEETING DRAW: SF-6F, HIGH BEST

2.20 CALDER APPRENTICE SERIES HANDICAP (Round 12; 2.65 1m 5f 5yds) (18 runners)

101 (4) 6-4 MEL'S BABY 21 (D.F.G.) 3m 4-10 J. Berry 1-1, 8 (2) 6-4 RISKY WHISKY 21 (D.F.G.) 3m 4-12 J. Berry 1-1, 103 (14) 11-2 RUMBLE WALKER 3 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 104 (12) 6-4 SILENT BEET 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 105 (1) 6-4 CAVORD 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 107 (10) 6-4 RYDING GREEN 14 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 108 (9) 6-4 GADGE 10 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 T. Soden 1-1, 109 (8) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 110 (7) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 111 (6) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 112 (5) 6-4 RATTLE 14 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 113 (4) 6-4 SILENT BEET 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 114 (3) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 115 (2) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 116 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 117 (2) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 118 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 119 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 120 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 121 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 122 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 123 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 124 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 125 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 126 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 127 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 128 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 129 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 130 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 131 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 132 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 133 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. Berry 1-1, 134 (1) 6-4 RUMBLE WALKER 15 (D.F.G.) 3m 5-8 J. 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BOXING

Tyson's eye injury wreaks havoc with Lewis bout

By SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT

THE postponement of the fight between Evander Holyfield and Mike Tyson in Las Vegas, because of an eye injury suffered by Tyson in training, has rebounded on the plans of Lennox Lewis.

The World Boxing Council champion had hoped to defend his title against Henry Akinwande in Britain on July 5. Now the date will not only have to be changed but the bout may have to be moved to the United States.

The Lewis-Akinwande contest was all set to be staged in Britain the day before the Wimbledon men's singles final. A deal was on the point of being signed between Don King, Akinwande's promoter, and Panix, the London promotion company behind Lewis, when the news of the Holyfield-Tyson bout broke.

Panix has now had to think again about the advisability of holding the British bout so close to the American one, which has been postponed

from May 3 to June 28. Panix explained that, as he could not be certain of getting Sky viewers to subscribe to pay-per-view for two bouts only a week apart, he had not only to find a new date for the Lewis bout but also to cut down Akinwande's purse, which was a substantial one.

However, Eliades believes he can secure a new deal with King. He hopes to bring the British bout forward to June 14 but it may have to go to Atlantic City in New Jersey. Eliades says the fact that Lewis must get 75 per cent of the purse gives him a stronger hand when dealing with King.

"After the Tyson-Holyfield postponement, it was all up in the air as far as Lennox's fight was concerned," Eliades said. "If I had to choose between the two fights, I know which one I would choose and it wouldn't be Lennox's fight. As a result I have had to cut down the very good money I was giving

Akinwande [believed to be around \$4 million]. Also, June 14 could be better for us because the 14-day gap between the two fights is better than a week."

Eliades added that, because the major share of the purse money must come to Lewis, he was in a better position than King to win the right to stage the show. By entering into a private arrangement with Lewis, who is also his business partner, Eliades would pay considerably less than the 75 per cent he is entitled to. A big saving could help him trump King's move.

The sums do not add up in favour of King, who will have to pay a prohibitive \$10 million and more to secure the promotion if the bout went to purse bids. It would be better for King to do a deal with Eliades than go to pure offers, which would have to be made public.

Tyson needs all of the 11 weeks to get his eye into good enough shape to face the man who so humiliated him last time. The cut over the left eye had 12 stitches on March 17 when it was injured in training. Last Wednesday it started to swell during sparring and Tyson's doctor, Barry Markham, thought it best to put off the bout. "I'm in great shape at this moment and ready to fight but I am just following the instructions of the doctor," Tyson told a press conference in Las Vegas.

Holyfield, who is convinced he will beat Tyson again, said at his training camp in Houston: "I guess I will just have to wait a little longer." Holyfield's attorney, Jim Thomas, said: "He's a remarkable human being, who accepts things the way they are better than anyone I've ever known. It is not going to deter him from beating Tyson again. He just has to do it a little later."

This is the third time a Tyson bout has had to be postponed because of his illness or injury since he came out of prison. In 1995, he called off a contest with Buster Mathis because of an injured thumb and last July bronchitis caused him to postpone a fight with Bruce Seldon.

"OK, yeah," Palmer conceded. "When I saw the delay, I half-thought, oh good, I might get out of it. It was a rocky time

with Mark Delaney, of West Ham, but the British Boxing Board of Control ruled that bout could not take place before the one with Francis.

Chris Sanigar, the manager of Francis, said: "Let's get the fight on in a month's time. My man is the best super-middleweight in Britain and what Dean Francis wants is to eliminate every super-middleweight and what's better than to start with Stacie and finish with Steve Collins?"

Starie to meet Francis

IF DAVID Starie, the Bury St Edmunds super-middleweight, still hopes to win a Lonsdale belt outright in record time, he will have to do it the hard way (Srikumar Sen writes). He will have to face his arch-rival, Dean Francis, of Basingstoke, within 90 days.

After Starie lifted the British title by stopping Sam Storey, of Belfast, on Tuesday, his manager, Frank Maloney, was hoping to match him

with Mark Delaney, of West Ham, but the British Boxing Board of Control ruled that bout could not take place before the one with Francis.

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SAILING: GROUP 4 GETS THE BETTER OF CONCERT IN RACE TO CAPE TOWN

Golding masters Southern Ocean

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

MIKE GOLDING and his drilled and determined team on Group 4 wanted to win every leg of the BT Global Challenge. Golding was pipped at the finish of the short third leg, but yesterday again showed his mastery of the boats and the Southern Ocean to be first into Cape Town.

Golding survived a cat-and-mouse game with Chris Tibbs's *Concert*, which had kept both crews on their toes for the past five days, and slipped across the finish in the early hours of yesterday morning. *Concert*, which was dismasted in the second leg, came in just 20 minutes later after 6,200 miles of racing, followed by Simon Walker, on *Toshiba Wave Warrior*, a further four hours back.

This has been the hardest leg of the race in terms of the punishment both crews and yachts have been subjected to since the restart in Sydney on

March 2. The south Indian Ocean served up an unrelenting series of gales and three huge storms, two of which were particularly frightening and vicious, with winds up to 70 knots and difficult and dangerous seas. Most yachts, including Golding's, suffered damage — *Pause To Remember* broke her boom — and the list of injuries to crew got ever longer.

When Golding set off from Sydney, Walker and Andy Hindley, on *Save The Children*, were virtually tied in overall second place, about 18 hours behind him. This presented Golding with the difficulty of trying to cover them both. However, Hindley was still at sea yesterday and was expected to finish sometime today, dropping him out of the overall picture with a total deficit behind Golding of around two days.

Walker, meanwhile, is now alone in second place, about 22 hours behind Golding, who can be expected to keep a very close eye on the talented young

former crew volunteer for the remainder of the race. Although there are still two long legs to go, to Boston and then Southampton, and the lottery of the Doldrums, it is hard to see Golding losing his grip on proceedings. As the celebrations go underway in the shadow of Table Mountain, Alex Sizer, 21, a student from Surrey and one of Golding's hard-working crew, reflected on the arduous voyage from Australia. "It was pretty dreadful," she said. "but I'd go

back there — I really would. It was really tough, but I know I can do it. The worst part was being physically uncomfortable, being cold and wet almost all the time."

In London yesterday, Pete Goss became only the sixth recipient of the Royal Ocean Racing Club Seafarers Trophy since its donation to the club in 1981. This was in recognition of his "exceptional seamanship in taking *Aqua Quorum* to the rescue of Raphael O'Neill in the Southern Ocean".

Presenting the trophy at a lunch at the club, Terry Robinson, its commodore, said: "It is doubtful that the club, with all its history and tradition, has had equal cause to honour a yachtsman of exceptional note." Since his spectacular finish to the Vendée Globe just over two weeks ago, Goss has been on a non-stop marathon of media interviews. However, he is already planning his next venture, which is believed to be an entry in The Race in the year 2000.

BOWLS

Allcock elevated by reversal of fortune

RICHARD SHERGOLD and Andy Wills, who helped their renowned Bentham club colleague, Tony Allcock, to secure the triples title yesterday, said that winning their first national indoor championship was a dream come true (David Rhys Jones writes).

To Allcock, by contrast, his third indoor triples win must have seemed like waking up at the end of a nightmare. It was, he explained, his sixth national indoor final at Melton Mowbray, but the first that he has managed to win.

Allcock is too polite to criticise the green, but it is well-known that he has had his reservations since the championships moved there in 1989.

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Brian Senior and I missed an almost lay-down grand slam on this hand in the critical match between Armstrong and Calderwood in the 1996-97 Premier League.

RESULTS 1. Group 4 27/48 07hr 05min 05 sec. (01-05-05) GMF: 1. 2. Concert 37-23-25-28, 3. Toshiba Wave 41-16-11-30, 4. Commercial Union 40-17-11-29, 5. Goss 38-23-25-28, 6. The Children 116, 7. 30Cox 171, 8. Global Teamwork 172, 9. Ocean Rover 247, 10. 77hr 12, 11. Tide 318, 11. Nuclear Fleet 371, 12. Caledon 422, 13. 40hr 12, 14. Heath, Phoenix II 531, 14. Pause 12, 15. Heston, Phoenix II 531, 14. Pause 12.

North was the dealer, and with no opposition bidding this was our sequence:

W	E
AKQS	NT
WK 10 82	W 4 5
QK8	A Q 10 93
AK8	8

(1) 20-22 points.

(2) Showing at least five hearts — a transfer bid.

(3) With a 2 NT opening with no great support for hearts I would just bid 3 Hearts. So to bid something else (known as "breaking the transfer") shows heart support. The standard tournament treatment is to bid a new suit shows a "source of tricks" — K Q J X, A Q J X or A K Q X to bid 3 NT shows a good heart fit, hoping to draw the suit in 3 NT; and to bid Four Hearts shows good heart support but no particular side feature.

(4) In auctions of this type, Four Diamonds would be a "retransfer", still allowing the strong hand to play a heart contract. So any other bid is a cue-bid, and Four Hearts is used as a cue-bid in diamonds.

Andrew Manton and Ian Walker gave Sharpe good support, but Bentham scored a four on the fourteenth end to draw level at 11-11.

Kingsthorpe edged ahead again, but a treble enabled Bentham to take a two-shot lead into the last end and it was all in the balance until Sharpe's final misfortune.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

FEASANCE
a. Pheasant pens
b. Reluctance
c. Performance

GAZOOON
a. A nautical ejaculation
b. A small baboon
c. A troupe

GRAVEDO
a. A cold
b. A huge catapult
c. A halibut

FAIENCE
a. Dolce far niente
b. Feudal duty
c. Glazed earthenware

Answers on page 45

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Kramnik leads
After six rounds of the elite tournament in Dos Hermanas, Spain, the young Russian grandmaster Vladimir Kramnik has edged ahead of the field. In the sixth round he won a complicated game against Judit Polgar.

Polgar, in previous encounters, has a wretched score against Kramnik. Here she decided to head for an immediate draw by employing the notoriously harmless exchange variation against the French Defence. Having made this decision, she switched to conducting a complicated middlegame in which successive sacrifices left her behind on material for no visible compensation.

Polgar's final chance to resist came on move 43, when she should have captured Black's pawn on e5 with her own pawn. After the move chosen, her entir position promptly collapsed.

SCORES (after sixth round, April 4).
Anand, Polgar, Kramnik, 3½; Karpov and Topalov, 3; Shirov, Salov and Short, 2½; Miles, 1.

White: Judit Polgar
Black: Vladimir Kramnik
Dos Hermanas, April 1997

French Defence

1	e4	g6
2	d4	d5
3	exd5	xd5
4	Nf3	Nc6
5	Bd3	Bd6
6	0-0	Ne7
7	c4	dc4
8	Bxc4	0-0
9	h4	Be6
10	Bxe6	be6

Diagram of final position

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

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Dos Hermanas, April 1997

French Defence

1	e4	g6
2	d4	d5
3	exd5	xd5
4	Nf3	Nc6
5	Bd3	Bd6
6	0-0	Ne7
7	c4	dc4
8	Bxc4	0-0
9	h4	Be6
10	Bxe6	be6

White resigns

Diagram of final position

Diagram of final position

White: Judit Polgar
Black: Vladimir Kramnik

Dos Hermanas, April 1997

French Defence

1	e4	g6
2	d4	d5
3	exd5	xd5

TENNIS

Kafelnikov makes swift departure in Portugal

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

VEVGENY KAFELNIKOV, of Russia, made a disappointing return from injury yesterday when he was beaten 6-2, 6-0 by Gilbert Schaller in the first round of the Estoril Open in Oeiras, Portugal, the first European tournament of the year on clay.

Kafelnikov, the French Open champion and the No 1 seed for this event, was playing his first match since breaking a finger in January and was overwhelmed by his Austrian opponent in less than an hour. "He didn't have any self-confidence," Schaller said of Kafelnikov, who is 79 places above him in the world rankings at No 4.

Also eliminated was the No 3 seed, Wayne Ferreira, who lost 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 to Francisco Cabello, of Argentina. Cabello, ranked No 470 in the world, overcame leg cramp and a 3-0 deficit in the third set to oust the South African.

Elsewhere, Carlos Moyá, the No 2 seed, advanced to the third round with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Richard Fromberg, of Australia, while his fellow Spaniard, Alex Corretja, cruised into the second round with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over Herman Gumy, of Argentina. Marcelo Filippi, of Uruguay, recovered from a set down to beat Juan Albert Viloca, of Spain, 3-6, 7-6, 6-1.

Monica Seles has pulled out of the Women's Tennis Association tournament in Amelia Island, Florida, this week as she has bronchitis. The former world No 1 had been due to face Jennifer Capriati in the first round, but her place in the draw now goes to Oliva Diaz of Argentina.

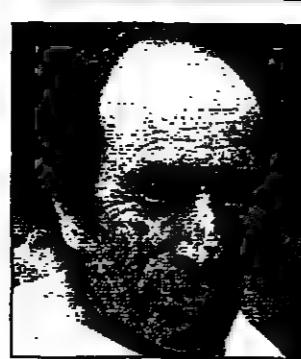
Seles, out of action for most of the season because of injury, narrowly lost to the new world No 1, Martina Hingis, of Switzerland, in a three-set final in Hilton Head on Sunday, only her second tournament after a four-month lay-off.

Jeremy Bates and Chris Bailey, of Britain, now both retired from the ATP Tour, are to team up to play in the Legends Tournament in Scotland next month. The event is to be staged alongside the women's World Doubles Cup at the Craiglockhart Tennis Centre in Edinburgh from May 21 to 24.

Bates, six times the British champion, is now the Lawn Tennis Association's manager of men's national training, while Bailey is a television commentator.

Chelsea prepare for acrimonious parting

BRIAN GLANVILLE



When relationships reach breaking point

Rund Gullit and Gianluca Vialli have probably reached the point of no return, after Chelsea's fiasco against Arsenal last Saturday. "This town," they might say, as is said in the West End, "ain't big enough for both of us." Gullit has been tactless, Vialli feels humiliated. As Italian stars do, he has given soft answers in England, but spoken grievous words on Italian television. But to call Gullit jealous of Vialli surely borders on absurdity.

In this respect, Fabio Capello, the former manager of AC Milan, now manager, for the moment, of Real Madrid, has been called in support. He had accused Gullit of "arrogance" when once he brought himself on to attack, rather than take Vialli off the bench, "when everyone knows Gullit's finished as a player. He didn't get anywhere near the ball".

The fact is that Gullit is very far from finished as a player. He remains, potentially, a majestic figure, though he himself has said repeatedly he would be quite happy to stop playing.

Remember, too, that Capello is not entirely an objective observer. Under his aegis at Milan, Gullit twice in a season left the club for Sampdoria, the second time after an unhappy stay when he no longer seemed *persona grata* in the dressing room.

It has been alleged that for every "Gullit" shirt sold by the Chelsea club shop, 25 have been sold of Vialli's, a figure that the club shop dismisses. In any case, what would it matter?

It would surely be astounding if a player as proud and celebrated as Vialli did not feel badly about his



Gullit monopolises the ball in training as Vialli, as he has done so often this season, looks on

exclusion from the team. He reacted bitterly to being dropped by the then manager, Arrigo Sacchi, from Italy's 1994 World Cup finals squad. When it seemed that they might be reconciled, Vialli learnt to his fury, that Sacchi, never the most tactful of men, had carried out polls among his players. Many of them came from

Milan, and Vialli was thumped down. When many came from his own club, Juventus, the answer was positive.

Stand-offs between famous players and a dominating manager are commonplace of football history, not least in Italy. "He's mad!" Roberto Baggio said after Sacchi pulled him

off the field at Giants Stadium during the World Cup game against Norway in 1994, after Pagliuca, the Italy goalkeeper, had been sent off.

Despite the subsequent, vital World Cup goals he scored, Baggio was never dear to Sacchi. He was publicly horrified that season when Sacchi returned as manager of

Milan and was then promptly dropped him from the team.

At least Chelsea have kept Vialli, even if, at the end of this season, he moves to pastures new, probably in Italy. Juventus, by contrast, jettisoned him last season, even though he had just captained the team that won the European Cup. Just as, with equal ruthlessness, they had jettisoned Baggio, the season before. And what of the emotional Fabrizio Ravanelli, 'the White Feather', scorer of Juventus' goal in that European Cup final?

Within weeks he was summoned from his native Perugia to Turin and told that he was on his way. "Like a bolt from the blue," he cried, as he often does. There, indeed, was humiliation for you — though, as an Italian critic remarked, Ravanelli had publicly told his coach, Marcello Lippi, to go to hell once too often.

'It would be astounding if Vialli did not feel badly about his exclusion'

What Chelsea have suffered from is simply an embarrassment of riches. The evening Gianfranco Zola arrived from Parma and attended a press conference, Gullit was asked how he would accommodate Zola. Mark Hughes and Vialli in attack. He replied that he might play all three!

It did not work and when Vialli partnered Hughes, they duplicated rather than complemented one another. Once it grew clear that Hughes and Zola worked wonderfully together, Gullit was on the horns of a dilemma.

You might criticise him for asking his players which formation they preferred, hearing a response that they wanted two players up front — managers should make up their own minds — but there can be no doubt that this was the ideal solution.

Vialli can console himself that when he did leave Juventus, it was, thanks to the Bosman ruling, on a free transfer — and that, as the main man in Italy's players' union, he had extended that concession to domestic transfers. Meanwhile, you can understand his frustration. Even if this is scarcely the first case of its kind.

Barcelona struggle to overcome injury problems

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

AT full strength, Barcelona would be worthy favourites for the Cup Winners' Cup, but when Fiorentina, of Italy, take the field at the Nou Camp Stadium tonight, they will have every reason to believe they can upset the odds.

Barcelona have an injury problem, indeed several of them, involving players who would ordinarily demand places in the first team. Iván de la Peña, Josep Guardiola, Sergi and Luis Enrique are all key figures in the Barcelona line-up. de la Peña and Guardiola, offering vision in midfield and Sergi and Luis Enrique strength and pace along the left touchline. None seems likely to play in the semi-final, first leg match tonight and, with possible replacements also struggling, Bobby Robson, the coach, has a problem.

Worse: it is a problem that has arisen at a bad time. Barcelona may have won the Cup Winners' Cup on three occasions in the past but, with the Spanish League firmly in the grip of their rivals, Real Madrid, success in Europe would ease growing pressure from their supporters. Suggestions that Guardiola is to join Parma in Italy during the summer and that Ronaldo, the brilliant Brazilian, is a money-no-object target for Lazio have hardly helped matters. At least Barcelona are in form, having thrashed Sporting Gijón 4-0 over the weekend.

Thus, Fiorentina arrived in Barcelona in bullish mood. Their Argentine striker, Gabriel Batistuta, said: "I've never felt inferior to anyone. Sure, the Catalan side has 22 great players and lots of international experience, but the real Fiorentina can beat anyone."

Nor will they concentrate their attentions, simply on Ronaldo. "That would be equivalent to allowing a free hand to all the other nine players, all equally useful," Claudio Ranieri, the Fiorentina coach, said.

Gray hopes for repeat of history

ANDY GRAY, the former England midfield player, will draw on all his experience of cup upsets when he plays for Falkirk in the Tennents Scottish Cup semi-final against Celtic at Ibrox on Saturday.

Gray was a member of the Crystal Palace team that beat Liverpool 4-3 at Villa Park in 1990 in a memorable semi-final. "Liverpool were hot favourites," Gray said. "They had beaten us 9-0 earlier that season and nobody gave us a chance in the cup semi-final but we just went out and did it."

Falkirk, of the Bell's Scottish League first division, are the underdogs and talk of internal strife at Celtic Park has not altered the opinions of the bookmakers. "There have been a lot of headlines about Celtic and their problems but to be honest those are all about the manager and the chairman they have nothing to do with the players," Gray said.

"But this is the semi-final I wanted. If Falkirk are to go out, and I am not being negative, then I'd rather we went down to Celtic in front of 50,000, than lose to Dundee United of Kilmarnock."

Gray, 33, who has also played for Aston Villa, Queens Park Rangers and Tottenham Hotspur, won his one England cap in Poland in 1991. His career at Brockville has been revived since Alex Totten succeeded Eamonn Bannon as manager at the end of last year.

"Alex is like a player. He gets nervous before big games and doesn't try to hide it and he shows his emotions when we win. If he hadn't come to Falkirk I would be sitting back with a cigar, picking up my wages and not worrying in the slightest," Gray said.

Porterfield to return home

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

IAN PORTERFIELD is to resign as coach to the Zimbabwe national team because of what he called yesterday "unwarranted criticism". The Scot, a former manager of Chelsea, Sheffield United and Aberdeen, said he would not extend his six-month contract with the Zimbabwe Football

Association (Zifa) when it expires at the end of April because he had had enough. Porterfield helped rebuild the national team in neighbouring Zambia when their squad perished in a plane crash in 1993, but he has undergone heavy criticism since taking the Zimbabwe job. Local media have accused him of transforming the Zimbabwe side from an attacking outfit into an ultra-defensive one.

Zimbabwe have lost three away matches, won three and drawn one home game under his charge in the qualifying rounds of the African nations' cup and World Cup and are in danger of not qualifying for either of the two events for the first time since 1982.

Porterfield is too much unwarranted criticism of the team here and it is unlike in Zambia, where everyone was behind the team," Porterfield said, adding that he would leave after Zimbabwe's home match against Angola in the next World Cup qualifier on April 27. "I am definitely going back home to see my wife and my children soon after the game against Angola. Even if Zimbabwe win 5-0, or even if I am offered a lot of money, that will not count. I will be very happy to go home," he said.

Three managers fell foul of the Football Association yesterday for talking out of turn to match officials. Brian Horton, of Huddersfield Town, was severely censured and fined £100 for comments made to a linesman in the Yorkshire club's home defeat by Bolton Wanderers on February 22. It was Horton's second misconduct charge of the season.

Kevin Ratcliffe, of Chester City, was censured and fined £200 for talking out of turn to the referee during his side's game at Fulham on March 1. John Baldwin, the manager of

Fulham stall celebrations to chase championship medals

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

that Fulham is still there by the river and it's a club with a big beating heart. The game sometimes kicks you in the teeth and this is the first hit if happiness we've had for about ten years."

Simon Morgan, the Fulham captain, was almost overwhelmed. "A 0-0 result at Mansfield might not sound too good, but it was a great point for us," he said. "I feel shattered, we all do, and I can't really describe my feelings when the final whistle

For Fulham and Wigan, it was an equally memorable occasion, confirming their upward departure from the third division and bringing due reward for eight months' graft. Fulham drew 0-0 away to Mansfield Town in a dour encounter, while Wigan beat Colchester United 1-0 at Springfield Park.

Major League Soccer (MLS) in the United States will add teams in Miami and Chicago for the 1998 season, expanding the league to 12 teams, it was announced yesterday. The Miami team will play its home games at the Orange Bowl, while the Chicago club will be based at Soldier Field, home to Chicago Bears, of the National Football League.

Leeds United are preparing a bid for the highly-rated Bury defender, Chris Luckett. David O'Leary, the Leeds assistant manager, was at Gigg Lane on Tuesday to check the form of the centre back, who would cost Leeds around £1.5 million, and O'Leary would not have been disappointed, with Luckett outstanding again in Bury's rearguard as they extended their lead at the top of the Nationwide League second division to four points.

"I know from experience that you only get a medal if you win the title," Hill said. "If the players want a medal to take home to their wives and mums, then that's what they've got to do."

"It's still a moment of joy to be grasped and savoured and a moment to let London know

went. It was just brilliant. We've got four games left, four parties, but we still desperately want to win that title. I've never been hugged by so many supporters and I just wish they had shaved!"

For Micky Adams, the Fulham manager, it represented the pinnacle of his career. "I haven't really had many great moments, apart from an FA Cup semi-final when I was at Leeds," he said. "This has surpassed anything I could have dreamt of."

Adams, 35, took charge only



Adams: surprised

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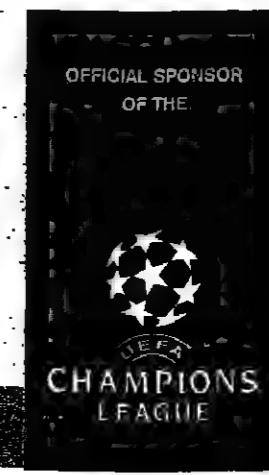
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Adams, 35, took charge only

LATEST GERMAN TRANSFER NEWS: VIALLI LEAVES RUBBER RESEARCH

DEPARTMENT FOR TREAD PATTERN LABORATORY

TYRES — ENGINEERED IN GERMANY



Men behaving not badly, but miserably

Gender stereotypes survive down the ages. The bread man may now be a whiney, but men still go forth to win. Men do not cry, unless they omitted to grow up, like Gazza. Every man of every age knows that at work, there is one thing he must never do: he must never throw his head in his hands and say "I can't cope".

Of course men cry, but the point is that most of them, us, can remember the exact number of times that they have done so. Of course men have moments when they cannot cope, but when those moments loom men note the signs. They walk away from their desks, jobs, families, lives in order to fall apart in private.

The most striking thing about *Modern Times: Braithwaite* (BBC2) last night was that none of the four stressed men it featured could sit down with their (obviously caring) families and say: Please

help me. I would venture that nearly all of the men reading this have needed to do that at least once, however fleetingly, but the impulses of the hunter-gatherer, the breadwinner, are strong. The confession of weakness is seen by many as the ultimate weakness.

Dr Terry Hirst was a successful GP but when his practice went over to fundholding the paperwork tripled and, as his daughter eloquently said, "the colour went out of his eyes". Terry went to see a gamekeeper he knew, ostensibly because he was interested in hunting. Terry tried out a shotgun, walked into the gamekeeper's house carrying the gun and shot himself to death in the kitchen.

Martyn Sheppard and his wife, Jean, ran a successful corner shop. When a supermarket opened nearby, the business collapsed. The couple worked 14 hours a day, but to no avail. Bills piled up, letters from banks were left unopened,

Martyn's first job every morning was to pull the telephone cord out of the wall. Eventually he had a breakdown. "I always wanted to be successful," he said. "Now I just want to be happy."

Ray Wilcox, sociable and outgoing, had been a DSS executive in Newcastle for 23 years. His wife, Alison, knew little about the strain he was under, in fact the family used to joke about the "easy" job he had. Alison did once find a bottle of rum hidden in the garden shed, which Ray explained by saying that he had it on a Sunday night to prepare for the week ahead.

Some years ago, Alison came home from work to find Ray had gone. The police told Alison that Ray fitted the description of a man who had jumped off a bridge over the Tyne; three weeks later the police discovered that this man wasn't Ray. He has not written,

REVIEW

Peter Barnard



telephoned or been seen since.

Christopher James had a happy life. He was an executive with British Gas but when 25,000 redundancies were announced in the 1980s Christopher's workload increased. The number of security staff was reduced at night, which meant that Christopher had to sit in his office doing his job and watching a security monitor at the same time.

He became ill, lost weight. Eventually he took two weeks' holiday in Tobago and has never come back. He built a complex of rooms, restaurant and pool and runs that from a pair of shorts. He is not in hiding nor is he dead, but, like the other three, to escape he had to change the context.

There are no statistics for how many men leave home to avoid painting the upstairs lavatory and I do not wish to encourage anyone to watch *Home Front* (BBC2) for fear of precipitating a domestic crisis. But watching do-it-yourself programmes is like viewing cookery shows: good fun if you enjoy collecting reasons not to do things yourself.

Home Front is presented by Tess Shaw, whose smile should be marketed by Cuprinol; it survives in all weathers. The trend in these programmes is to help "ordinary people" by bringing in designers, who will show you how

to make a pair of curtains out of a tablecloth or paint a room in eight shades of scarlet with the result that only a blind man could be polite about it.

Well yes, last night's families seemed genuinely impressed, so perhaps I am being churlish. You do long for somebody to tip paint over the designer's head or run screaming from the room and I am always suspicious when both the children and the adults in a family enthuse about room decoration. That is a new one on me.

You will have guessed that I shall not be entering *Home Front's* amateur decorator of the year competition, even though I have finished two of the five window sills that needed urgent attention about two years ago. Perfect tension.

Another DIY series, *Country-side Undercover* (Channel 4) ended last night. This is DIY television

involving hidden microphones and fuzzy sound but the series has been none the worse for that. This is the sort of revelatory series that gives Douglas Hogg something to think about, or would we be not presently thinking about the rest of his life?

Last night, in *Flying Feathers*, the ornithologist, David Braithwaite, went after people who produce books giving the precise locations of the nests of Britain's threatened birds of prey. This in itself is not illegal and the people who read the books doubtless only wish to have the information on a sort of trainspotting basis and would not dream of having anything to do with the illegal trade in eggs.

Braithwaite is certainly a convincing undercover man: one of the people he visited asked him to write a book on the nesting sites of the sea eagle, an offer Braithwaite felt able to refuse.

6.00am Business Breakfast (11497)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (70737584)
9.05 Election Call Liberal Democratic MP Charles Kennedy answers viewers' questions (636855)
10.00 Style Challenge (69403)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (51855)
11.00 News (T) regional news and weather (4796519)
11.05 The Really Useful Show (T) (915010)
11.35 Change That (6580584)
12.00 News (T) regional news and weather (4463887)
12.05 Call My Bluff (5015316)
12.35 Good Living (9846867)
1.00 News (T) and weather (77792)
1.30 Regional News and weather (50303671)
1.45 The Weather Show (39801478)
1.50 Neighbours (T) (22738128)
2.15 Quirky (22) (T) (3849308)
3.00 Through the Keyhole (9949)
3.30 Playdays (T) (608497) 3.50 Postman Pat (6212403) 4.05 Felix the Cat (T) (5276871) 4.20 Julie Jekyll and Harriet Hyde Lynda Bellingham stars (T) (T) (5264838)
4.35 Return to Jupiter New series of sci-fi adventures with the characters first seen in <i>Escape from Jupiter</i> (T) (7573887) 5.00 Newsround (T) (5151836) 5.10 No Sweat (T) (5748297)
5.35 Neighbours (T) (2325251)
6.00 News and weather (861)
6.30 Regional News (213)
7.00 Watchdog presented by Anne Robinson, with Alice Beer (T) (2300)
7.30 EastEnders Hux and Lenny decide to come clean and the wedding plans are causing friction between Ricky and Bua (T) (497)
8.00 Animal Hospital Roli Harris meets the staff and patients at the Hampden Veterinary Hospital and roving reporter Shauna Lowry encounters a dog being trained to work with the deaf (T) (8720)
8.30 Only Fools and Horses: Cash and Carry An opportunity arises for Del to make his fortune. With David Jason and Nicholas Lyndhurst (T) (7855)
9.00 News (T) and weather (8261268)
9.55 Election Broadcast: Labour (T) (565132)
10.00 SKY NEWS Mrs Merton in Las Vegas The plain speaking pensioner meets Patrick Duffy and Tony Curtis (1/2) (T) (43336)
10.30 Question time in the second of the election hustings programme chaired by David Dimbleby. Members of the public put the Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown on the spot (T) (23478)
11.30 Lords of Discipline (1983) with David Keith and Robert Prosky. In 1964 a black man becomes the first cadet at a South Carolina military school where harsh discipline and violent humiliation are the norm. A maverick senior is given the task of making sure he stays at the academy and — keeping him alive. Directed by Franc Roddam (T) (10123)
1.10am Weather (8614275)

7.15am See Hear Breakfast (News (T) (8117010) 7.40 Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles (T) (1) (4208565) 7.55 Blue Peter (T) (T) (570009) 8.35 The Raccoons (T) (922597) 9.00 Cartoon (2144769) 9.10 The Phil Silvers Show (b/w) (3547294)
9.35 The Musers (b/w) (6708736) 10.30 Teletribes (T) (6704524)
11.20 Goff — US Masters (104687) 12.30pm Working Lunch (7319) 1.00 Secret Life of Toys (T) (53989854)
1.15 US Masters Golf. Steve Rider reports from Augusta (7475039) 2.50 The A to Z of Food (7492478)
3.00 News (T) (7887584)
3.05 Campaign Roadshow Nick Ross invites members of the public to quiz top politicians (T) (997519)
3.55 News (T) (670578) 4.00 Blockbusters (6889045) 4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (6881132) 4.55 Esther (9884565) 5.30 Today's the Day (590)
6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (T) (900316)
6.45 Quantum Leap Sam materialises as Marilyn Monroe's chauffeur and learns of her imminent suicide (T) (T) (5175819)
7.30 First Sight WALES: Ken Horn's Hot Wok EAST: Matter of Fact Election Special MIDLANDS: Midlands Report NORTH/SOUTH WEST: Close Up Election Special NORTH/EAST/NORTH/WEST: Close Up North SOUTH: Southern Eye (869)
7.58 Video Nation Election Shorts (869213)
8.00 Ken Horn's Hot Wok Crab, Burmese-style chicken and double-steamed cabbage soup and an exotic fruit dessert (T) (T) (2590)
8.30 Top Gear The results of Top Gear's annual Car Satisfaction Survey. Plus: the new Daihatsu Mova (T) (5497)
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8.00 Ken Horn's Hot Wok Crab, Burmese-style chicken and double-steamed cabbage soup and an exotic fruit dessert (T) (T) (2590)
8.30 Top Gear The results of Top Gear's annual Car Satisfaction Survey. Plus: the new Daihatsu Mova (T) (5497)
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SWIMMING 43

Early visit to Bath leaves Palmer feeling refreshed

SPORT

THURSDAY APRIL 10 1997

SAILING 43

Skippers finish minutes apart after 6,200-mile chase



Spanish eyes set on striker

Barcelona stay tight-lipped on Shearer bid

By PETER BALL

THE North East may not win many trophies, but it is fast becoming the centre for international transfer speculation. Yesterday, Newcastle United rather than Middlesbrough became the target, with Barcelona reportedly offering £20 million, a world record were the transfer to go ahead, for Alan Shearer.

Both clubs were tight-lipped yesterday. A Barcelona official was unable to confirm or deny the reports. Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, characteristically would not even go that far, refusing all requests for a comment.

Behind the barricades, though, there seems little doubt that Barcelona did make an approach for Shearer this week. Bobby Robson has long been an admirer of the player and made three attempts last summer to take Shearer to Barcelona when he first arrived at the Nou Camp.

"Shearer has to be the best European striker in the game at present," Robson said at the time. "Certainly, Germany, France, Spain and Italy haven't got anybody better than him."

"He is the traditional English centre forward. He is as good as anything England has had since we started competing in World Cups back in the 1950s. He holds up the ball



Shearer: possible offer

brilliantly, he is strong, brave, powerful in the air and a terrific finisher. He is a wonderful player."

Blackburn, however, turned the bids down, and instead

Robson signed Ronaldo from PSV Eindhoven. The arrival of the outstanding Brazil forward, who won the 1996 world

player-of-the-year award,

meant a more prolonged approach for Shearer unnecessary.

Now, with Ronaldo expected to leave for Italy in an estimated £30 million move in the summer, Shearer would make a natural replacement.

Shearer's internal politics as on the field.

Robson's bid for Shearer suggests that he is far from reconciled to leaving the Spanish club at the end of the season, as had been widely expected. If Ronaldo does leave for Lazio or Juventus, a big-name replacement will be essential, as much for Barcelona's internal politics as on the

field.

But if Barcelona's interest is

understandable, there seems

little possibility of Newcastle allowing Shearer to go. Although he was Kevin Keegan's last, and at £15 million his biggest, signing last summer, Shearer has a longstanding relationship with Dalglish. Although Dalglish is expected to make some significant changes in personnel in the summer, he is likely to see Shearer as central to his plans for rebuilding Newcastle.

Shearer has three years

remaining of the four-year contract he signed when he arrived from Blackburn Rovers last August so there is no pressure on Newcastle to sell. Quite the contrary, in fact, as Shearer's return to his home city was greeted on Tyneside as the return of the Messiah, and the Toon Army would revolt en masse at any suggestion of their hero being allowed to depart.

He made his comeback after his third groin operation inside a year in the FA Carling Premiership derby with Sunderland on Saturday, scoring Newcastle's equaliser in the 1-1 draw. He is still Newcastle's leading scorer, in spite of missing two months of the season with injuries.

Since their days together at Blackburn, Dalglish has been among Shearer's greatest admirers and will clearly do everything in his power to retain the England striker.

Barcelona's reported £20 million bid suggests that Newcastle's payment of £15 million last year was not as unreasonably high as thought at the time and, given the present inflated state of the market, an increased offer may be the only lever to prize Shearer away. With Newcastle in the process of floating on the stock market, every one of their assets must have a price and, if the Spanish club was to return with a better offer, there would be greater pressure to sell.

Shearer's vulnerability to injury, with three groin operations in just over 12 months, could persuade Newcastle to cash in but, unless the fee Barcelona receive for Ronaldo reaches absurd proportions, that seems unlikely.

Unlikely, but not impossible, the way the market is going. Yesterday, Real Madrid moved to protect their greatest asset, Raul Gonzalez, by giving him a new seven-year \$2 million-a-year contract and by writing in to it a transfer fee of \$42 million.

DOWN

1 Laid with flags (5)

7 Anointing with oil; suave charm (7)

8 St. Francis's espoused Lady (7)

9 City of oranges, of Barber (7)

11 Runner-up's place (6)

13 Try anyway (4,2,1,2)

15 Wrinkles by eyes (5,4)

19 Animal that gnaws (6)

21 Acrobat's garment (7)

23 Intuitive sympathy (7)

24 Portable rocket-launcher (7)

25 Girls' toys (5)

22 Hawk a bore (4)



José María Olazábal, of Spain, straps his finger before beginning his practice round at Augusta National as he prepares for the Masters, his first major since his long injury break from golf, which begins today. Report, page 46. Photograph: Lenny Ignelzi

Hick intent on regaining Test place

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

GRAEME HICK has been tipped to regain his place in the England side against Australia this summer by David Houghton, the Worcestershire coach, who acted in the same capacity for Zimbabwe during the winter when they beat England in the one-day international series.

He believes Hick has regained his hunger for the game after a six-month break after being overlooked for England's winter tour of Zimbabwe and New Zealand.

"Graeme was in fine form on our pre-season trip to Zimbabwe and everything I have seen of him so far smacks of determination," Houghton said yesterday.

Houghton, 39, who said that

"He has got himself super fit and now there is the desire to put runs on the board again. The break from the game has been good because now he wants to spend time at the crease."

"I told him at the end of last season to lock his bat away in the cupboard and not to pick it up for six months. Maybe, sometimes, a little boredom creeps in when you are playing all the year round, but that isn't there this year because he has a specific aim — to get back into the England side."

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Murray and McCann lead chairmen in division lobby

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE prospect of a Premiership in Scotland, based upon the FA Carling Premiership in England, came a step closer when chairmen from the ten premier division clubs voted against recommendations for a proposed restructuring of the League of 16, 12 and 12 clubs next season.

The plan to change the present system, in which teams are divided into four divisions of ten, in favour of a 16-team top division was originally put forward by Jack Steedman, of Clydebank, three months ago but is certain to fail. David Murray, chairman of Rangers, and his counterpart at Celtic, Ferguson McCann, are also looking at change and how the bigger clubs can command more revenue through television.

They are understood to

want him to continue to play a role by helping to consolidate recent successes, which include a drawn Test series with England. "I wasn't having second thoughts, but the Zimbabwean Board are looking at the fact that we've had a good season in which we've won a lot of matches and are starting to get onto a roll," Houghton said.

"We've quite a competitive side and they ... would like me to play on a little bit longer just to help maintain the current momentum."

"I'm not under contract to Zimbabwe any more and it is really a case of seeing how I feel around August time and whether I want to play again. The enthusiasm level is still quite high, although it dulls

when you have to spend 2½ days in the field. Fortunately, we didn't have too many of those last winter."

"I still feel I can do a job in the Tests, coming in at five or six and putting some experience in the middle order, but I don't think I should be playing one-day cricket."

"I tried to convince them to leave me out because I'm not up to the physical demands any more, but they still kept picking me."

Houghton is waiting to hear if he will be required again by his country in a coaching capacity and admitted that the fact he was still playing made for a difficult situation. "It put a lot of extra pressure on me and it is difficult for the captain in having the coach on

the field. Where does the chain of command end?" he said.

"I'm in charge in the dressing room, but once we cross onto the pitch the captain is in charge. But if something goes wrong, should I take over from him or leave him to make mistakes? Fortunately, we have grown up as a team and it was able to work quite well, but I'm not sure if it would on a permanent basis. I think the coach has got to be off the park."

"I don't know if the Zimbabwe Board are going to re-appoint me, but I was very surprised that they did not talk to me before I left home to come back to Worcestershire."

Atherton called, page 42
Scotland lost, page 42

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Rafter: regretful

Rafter apologises for drinking lapse

A REMORSEFUL Patrick Rafter yesterday apologised for playing a Davis Cup match for Australia last weekend while still affected by alcohol.

Australian newspapers on Monday reported that Rafter, the world No 43, and Mark Philippoussis went to a night club in Adelaide on Saturday to celebrate taking a 3-0 winning lead over the Czech Republic in their Davis Cup world group quarter-final.

Rafter admitted that he was still feeling the effects of drink during his reverse singles match on Sunday. "I'm glad you brought that up," Rafter said, when asked

about the incident after his 26-76, 6-4, 6-4 win over Mark Woodforde, his compatriot and Davis Cup team-mate in the first round of the Hong Kong Open yesterday.

"It is totally my fault. I do think the one regret I do have is giving children the wrong impression of using alcohol to win matches or to be a good athlete. You just can't do it."

Rafter, whose two singles victories against the Czechs had helped Australia to a 5-0 win and a place in the semi-final against United States, added: "It was a rare occasion for me to go out and celebrate like that." One of his opponents in the

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